

**PERCEPTIONS OF THE ORIGINS AND CAUSES OF
HERESY IN MEDIEVAL HERESIOLOGY**

Lucy E. Bosworth

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DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis and the research contained within it are my own original work, and that I have acknowledged all debts to others.

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Edinburgh, October 19, 1995

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines perceptions of the origins and causes of heresy in the polemical literature of the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries. It touches on two areas of academic interest. The first is the medieval concept of heresy, a subject which has received little attention from either historians or theologians. The second is the question of the historical origins of heresy, a problem which has received a considerable amount of attention. The thesis has two aims: one is to analyse the concept of heresy itself, the other is to set this concept within the context of the debate about the historical origins of heresy in the medieval west by examining what medieval polemicists themselves considered to be the origins of heresy.

Ch. 1 examines the formal definitions of heresy contained in polemical texts and other relevant literature, showing how the definitions moved away from concentrating on theological error, and thus 'heresy', towards contumacy and the authority of the Church, and thus the 'heretic'. Ch. 2 outlines the basic characteristics of the heretic and the ways in which these were conceived and discussed by orthodox contemporaries. Ch. 3 considers the causes of heresy as perceived by polemicists, setting these against the present-day debate, and argues that polemicists' analysis of the origins and causes of heresy was fundamentally incorrect. Ch. 4 analyses polemicists' accounts of the origins of particular heretical sects, highlighting the differences in approach between various polemicists. Ch. 5 examines the mindset which provides the underlying unity to these different approaches and reconsiders the concept of heresy in the light of the evidence presented in Ch. 4.

The central argument of this thesis is that polemicists' analysis of the origins and causes of heresy was distorted by their concept of 'the heretic'. First, their concept of heresy focused exclusively on the heretic as a particular kind of person. This separated heretics from merely sinful people and 'demonized' them to an extent which meant that they were deemed to have a supernatural nature transcending their earthly existence - a nature which was irredeemably evil, utterly inimical to the true Church and ultimately

created and sustained by the Devil. Polemicists viewed this nature as uniting not only all medieval heretics, but all heretics throughout time. The heretics with which they were dealing were seen as the descendants of the first heretic - universally agreed to be Simon Magus - through a diabolical succession which mirrored the Church's apostolic succession. This sense of the 'otherness' of the heretic reflects the Augustinian *civitas dei/diaboli* typology - translated by medieval polemicists into a two-churches typology - which was the foundation of the conceptual framework within which the medieval concept of heresy operated.

The thesis concludes that, almost without exception, polemicists - the very people who were disseminating information to be used in the intellectual fight against heresy - fundamentally misunderstood the origins and causes of heresy. The two-churches typology and the diabolical archetype to which all heretics were subsumed ensured that the intellectual fight against heresy was directed away from the Church itself, and towards a many-headed heretical demon which did not in reality exist.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFP	<i>Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum</i>
AHDLMA	<i>Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge</i>
AJT	<i>American Journal of Theology</i>
AM	<i>Annales du Midi</i>
AP	<i>Analecta Praemonstratensia</i>
ASOC	<i>Analecta Sacri Ordinis Cisterciensis</i>
BIHR	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</i>
BISIM	<i>Bulletino dell'Istituto storico italiano per il medio evo e Archivio muratoriano</i>
BLE	<i>Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique</i>
BMCL	<i>Bulletin of Medieval Canon Law</i>
CC (Con Med)	<i>Corpus Christianorum (Continuatio Mediaevalis)</i>
CCM	<i>Cahiers de civilisation médiévale</i>
CEC	<i>Cahiers d'études cathares</i>
CH	<i>Church History</i>
Concept of Heresy	W. Lourdaux and D. Verhelst (Eds), <i>The Concept of Heresy in the Middle Ages: Proceedings of the International Conference of Louvain, May 13-16, 1973</i> (Louvain, 1976).
DCB	<i>Dictionary of Christian Biography</i>
DDC	<i>Dictionnaire de droit canonique</i>
DLM	<i>Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasser Lexikon</i>
DTC	<i>Dictionnaire de théologie catholique</i>
EEC	<i>Encyclopedia of Early Christianity</i>
ER	<i>The Encyclopedia of Religion</i>

ET	<i>Encyclopedia of Theology</i>
ETL	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
FS	<i>Franciscan Studies</i>
Grundmann	Herbert Grundmann: <i>Ausgewählte Aufsätze</i> , Monumenta Germaniae Historica (Schriften) 25 (3 vols, Stuttgart, 1978)
HDR	<i>Handwörterbuch zur deutschen Rechtsgeschichte</i>
Hérésies et hérétiques	Ch. Thouzellier, (Ed.), <i>Hérésie et hérétiques: Vaudois, Cathares, Patarins, Albigeois</i> (Rome, 1969).
Hérésies et sociétés	J. le Goff (Ed.), <i>Hérésies et sociétés dans l'Europe pré-industrielle 11-18 siècles</i> , École pratique des hautes études: Civilisations et Sociétés (Paris, 1968).
Heresy and Literacy	P. P. A. Biller and A. Hudson (Eds), <i>Heresy and Literacy, 1000-1530</i> (Cambridge, 1994).
HJ	<i>Heythrop Journal</i>
IDB	<i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>
JECS	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
JEH	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
JMagHist	<i>Journal of Magic History</i>
JMH	<i>Journal of Medieval History</i>
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LM	<i>Lexikon des Mittelalters</i>
LPT	<i>Laval philosophique et théologique</i>
LTK	<i>Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche</i>
MBVP¹	<i>Maxima Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum, et Antiquorum Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum</i> , ed. M. de La Bigne (15 vols, Cologne, 1618-22)
MBVP²	<i>Maxima Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum, et Antiquorum Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum</i> , ed. M. de La Bigne (27 vols, Lyons, 1677)
MGH Lib Lit	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica (Libelli de Lite Imperatorum et Pontificum Saeculis)</i>

MGH Schr	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica (Schriften)</i>
MGH SS	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica (Scriptores)</i>
MIOG	<i>Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung</i>
Modernité et non-conformisme	M. Yardeni (Ed.), <i>Modernité et non-conformisme en France à travers les âges</i> , Actes du colloque organisé par l’institut d’histoire et de civilisation françaises de l’université de Haifa (Leiden, 1983).
MS	<i>Medieval Studies</i>
NCE	<i>New Catholic Encyclopedia</i>
NDB	<i>Neue deutsche Biographie</i>
ODCC	<i>Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church</i>
PGL	<i>A Patristic-Greek Lexicon</i>
PL	<i>Patrologiae Latinae Cursus Completus, Series Latina</i>
REL	<i>Revue des études latines</i>
RMAL	<i>Revue du moyen âge latin</i>
RSCI	<i>Rivista di storia della chiesa in Italia</i>
RSPT	<i>Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques</i>
RSR	<i>Récherches de science religieuse</i>
RTAM	<i>Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale</i>
SCH	<i>Studies in Church History</i>
SG	<i>Studi Gregoriani</i>
SH	<i>Social History</i>
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i>
TRE	<i>Theologische Realenzyklopädie</i>
TS	<i>Theological Studies</i>
USQR	<i>Union Seminary Quarterly Review</i>
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the Church's history the notion of 'heresy' has played a crucial role by defining, in a negative sense, those teachings which are not acceptable to the Church and where the boundaries of 'orthodoxy' must begin. It is inextricably bound up with the theological life of the Church, not only with the development of systematic theology in general, but more specifically with the development of ecclesiology.¹ It can still have a bearing on current theological debates; only a few years ago a theologian was convicted of heresy by the Presbyterian Church in Australia. The actual charge related to the doctrine of Scripture, but the context of his alleged heretical statements - a debate about the ordination of women - reminds one all too strongly of the way in which, in the medieval Church, seemingly innocuous statements could be transformed by issues of authority and power into heresy. For the modern historian of heresy an understanding of the basic structures of the concept of heresy is an essential tool with which to study the necessarily biased sources, and to discern typological and standardised statements from fact. Nevertheless, the question of the developmental history of the concept of heresy itself has received little attention either from theologians or historians. There are a number of useful dictionary articles, of which the best and most detailed is that contained in the *TRE*;² but there is only a moderate amount of discussion of the general concept from a

¹See e. g. Thomas's study *Newman and Heresy*, which brings out the significance of Newman's study of the early Church heretics for his subsequent understanding of Anglican ecclesiology.

²E.g. Betz, 'Häresie I'; Erler, 'Ketzer, Ketzerei'; Heinemann, 'Heresy I'; Naz, 'Hérésie, Hérétiques'; Patschovsky, 'Häresie'; Rahner, 'Heresy II'; Schindler, 'Häresie II'.

theological point of view.³ Discussion of the early history of the concept of heresy has tended to concentrate on the etymological roots of the concept, in particular on the distinction between the concepts of heresy and schism, thus covering the very earliest development of the concept.⁴ For the Patristic period there is Greenslade's 'Der Begriff der Häresie in der alten Kirche', but very little else dealing specifically with the concept of heresy.⁵ For the medieval period there is more literature available. Much of the initial inspiration for this study came from Herbert Grundmann's article 'Der Typus des Ketzers in mittelalterlicher Anschauung'.⁶ Grundmann pointed out the ubiquity of the standardised type of the heretic (mirroring the Church's 'ideal type' of the true believer), and called for an examination of this type as a necessary preliminary for studying the orthodox sources for the history of heresy - sources which were inevitably distorted by their authors' conception of the heretic. I am indebted to this work for outlining the principal characteristics of the 'heretic-type', although the scope of the article is inevitably limited by its size. For many years, however, Grundmann's study has remained the only one of its kind. The publication of the Proceedings of the 1973 International Conference at Louvain on the concept of heresy goes a long way towards remedying this defect; out of this volume I have found Moore's 'Heresy as Disease', Leclercq's 'L'hérésie d'après les écrits de S. Bernard de Clairvaux', and Verbeke's 'Philosophy and

³E.g. Brosch, *Das Wesen der Häresie*; Chenu, 'Orthodoxie et hérésie, le point de vue de théologien'; Congar, *L'Eglise une, sainte catholique et apostolique*, pp. 65-121; Huber, 'Häresie III'; Lawlor, 'Occult Heresy and Membership in the Church'; Rahner, 'Was ist Häresie?'.

⁴For dictionary articles see Lampe, 'Hairesis' & Schlier, 'Hairesis'. Further discussion in Greenslade, *Schism in the Early Church*, ch. 1; Petré, 'Haeresis, schisma et leurs synonymes Latins'; Simon, 'From Greek Hairesis to Christian Heresy'.

⁵E.g. de Guibert, 'La notion d'hérésie chez Saint Augustin'; Rüther, 'Dei eine Kirche und die Haeresie bei Klemens von Alexandrien'. Grundmann, 'Oportet' discusses the exegesis of the Pauline injunction 'Oportet et haereses esse' in this period.

⁶First published in *Kultur- und Universalgeschichte. Walter Goetz zu seinem 60. Geburtstage* (Leipzig/Berlin, 1927), pp. 91-107. I have used the version printed in the MGH (Schr) collection of Grundmann's works.

Heresy' most useful. More recently the focus has been on the question of literacy, with the publication of *Heresy and Literacy, 1000-1530*. In particular Biller's article 'The *topos* and reality of the heretic as *illitteratus*' draws attention to this aspect of the concept of heresy. Segl's book on heresy in Austria in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries contains some helpful discussion of the concept;⁷ whilst Alphandéry's 'Remarques sur le type sectaire dans l'hérésiologie médiévale latine' makes a brief contribution to the question. After the medieval period discussion of the concept of heresy virtually ends: I have found only le Brun's 'Le concept d'hérésie à la fin du XVII^e siècle: la controverse Leibniz-Bossuet'. Some articles on religious dissent in the early modern period are contained in the *Modernité et non-conformisme* volume edited by Yardeni, and Bainton's *The Travail of Religious Liberty*. More generally, there is Knox's *Enthusiasm*, which takes the question up to the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The numerous aspects which the concept of heresy embraces - 'intellectual' and 'popular' heresy, the expansion of the concept within canon law and papal and conciliar legislation, the problem of simony as heresy, the role which the changing concept of heresy played in the emergence of the Inquisition - inevitably meant that the scope of this thesis had to be curtailed. It appeared that the most fruitful way of understanding the concept of heresy during this period was to focus on medieval explanations for the origins and causes of heresy, since these ideas are most directly concerned with the essence of heresy and the heretic. This led directly into the second area with which this thesis is concerned: the modern historical debate about the origins and causes of heresy. The secondary literature for this is

⁷Segl, *Ketzer in Osterreich*, pp. 1-6.

discussed in Ch. 2, so it is sufficient to note here that the debate has been conducted within two extreme poles. In crude terms, there is the view on the one hand, represented by Morghen and Grundmann, that heresy was indigenous to western Europe and arose primarily through the institutional Church's failure to satisfy the desire for reform and the spiritual life which the Gregorian Reform Programme had stimulated. On the same side of the debate, but emphasising the importance of indigenous social and economic, rather than religious and spiritual, factors, stands Moore. On the opposite side is the idea, represented by Schmidt, Dondaine *et al*, that heresy was imported from the east through various suggested routes, such as the proselytizing activities of dualist missionaries. Many scholars - Broeckx, for example - have adopted an intermediate position, by which they admit a certain amount of influence from eastern dualism, but on western territory which had already been prepared for heresy by indigenous factors. There has been very little discussion of the - in many ways more interesting - question of what medieval churchmen, polemicists or legislators thought were the origins of heresy, and how far their views on this matter correspond with the complex realities which modern scholars are unravelling. This approach has the advantage of largely circumventing the problem of bias in the sources, since, from the point of view of this study, it is precisely the authors' prejudices and expectations in which we are interested - although one should still be careful to detect the bias when it occurs, if only because expectations or statements which do not correspond to the reality of the situation are for that very reason all the more significant.

The important question is by what means these aspects of the concept of heresy may best be traced. Initially it seemed that a study of the development and formalisation of canon law during this period, focusing in

particular on the debates about the definition and treatment of heresy, would be profitable. The difficulty with this approach is that the concept which it presents is a limited one, in that canon law reflects only the concept of heresy current among one particular group within the institutional Church, leaving many questions unanswered. How far did the concept of heresy which emerged from debates among the canon lawyers filter down the ecclesiastical hierarchy? Were they perhaps more influential in papal and curial circles, than in episcopal circles? The question of the relationship between papal and episcopal views of heresy is an important one. Whilst it was the Pope who decided policy towards heretical movements and initiated legislation, it was the bishops who were responsible for implementing that legislation, and who were, after all, most immediately and practically affected by the growing numbers of heterodox groups in their dioceses. Do we have here a case on the one hand of a papacy which was able to apply sharper theoretical distinctions, and to discriminate between heretical and orthodox; and on the other hand of the bishops, who had to deal not only with the heretics in practice, but also with the difficult problem of a populace which was largely unable to comprehend the finer distinctions which the papacy made between, for instance, the Franciscans and the Waldensians? Such a situation would indicate that there was no single concept of heresy, rather that there were differing, and sometimes conflicting ideas about its precise nature and treatment. A study of canon law, therefore, would give a somewhat one-sided - albeit revealing - view of the concept of heresy.

What was needed for a study of the medieval concept of heresy was a body of sources which held together as an autonomous collection, but which provided a wide variety of viewpoints and approaches within that unity. This is provided by the polemical literature of the twelfth, thirteenth and

fourteenth centuries - treatises which not surprisingly date from those centuries during which the popular heretical groups emerged and consolidated, and therefore cover precisely the period when the canon lawyers were debating the question of heresy, and the concept itself began to expand. The specific concern of this thesis is therefore with the concept or concepts of heresy current amongst the anti-heretical polemicists of this period. The majority of the polemical treatises were written by churchmen, although there are two treatises (Salvo Burci's *Liber supra Stella* and George's *Disputatio inter Catholicum et Paterinum haereticum*) which were written by laymen. Most deal with the Cathars or the Waldensians, although other sects make an occasional appearance. In spite of this the nature of the treatises is widely varied, due to the differing positions, concerns and methodology of the authors. Eckbert of Schönau and Bernard of Fontcaude were priests who wrote practical guides to heresy which were intended to be used by their colleagues in their own parishes. Far removed from these is Alan of Lille's scholastic work, *De fide catholica*. Some were written by men who were themselves reformed heretics (Durand of Huesca, Ermengard of Beziers and Reinerius Sacconi). Other were written by people engaged in the inquisitorial process for the information of their colleagues. Although a distinct group of sources, the variety within it is such that it gives a reasonably representative view for the Church hierarchy as a whole. It appeared, therefore, that this body of texts was uniquely placed to reveal what the orthodox views and definitions of heresy were, how churchmen responded to the challenge of the heretical movements, what assumptions governed their responses, the methods they used to counter their opponents and whether there were any differences in their approach to the problem of heresy.

I have not attempted to emulate Grundmann, who based his survey on 'as many witnesses from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries as possible'. I have taken to be 'polemical' those writings which were intended to provide information for people involved in the struggle against heresy. This means that, in addition to polemical treatises, material from some inquisitors' manuals and sermons has been included. Letters, chronicles and so on which incidentally discuss heresy, but whose primary purpose is not the refutation of heresy, have been excluded. A useful starting point was the list of polemical treatises contained in the Wakefield and Evans collection of sources *Heresies of the High Middle Ages*, their criteria being works 'which had a polemical purpose, in that they were attacks on heresy or hostile descriptions of it'.⁸ This is not a definitive list; Borst and Vicaire include in their categorisation of polemical literature a number of works which Wakefield and Evans consider to be of only indirect relevance.⁹ In practice, however, I have substantially followed Wakefield's and Evans' list, although making use of a few other works which they do not include, such as Berthold of Regensburg's sermons against the heretics, the Anonymous of Passau compilation, Alvarus Pelagius' *Collyrium fidei* and the treatise of Peter of Pilichdorff. The decision to concentrate on polemical writings, together with the focus on material dealing with the origins of heresy, meant that the chronological and geographical range of the sources was to a certain extent fixed at the outset. I have excluded the eleventh-century sources; first, because it is questionable whether polemical literature, in the sense in which I have defined it, existed at all in the eleventh century, and second, because these sources do not contain the kind of detailed material about the origins or causes of heresy with which this thesis is concerned. Such material is also

⁸ Appendix, pp. 633-38.

⁹ Borst, *Die Katharer*, pp. 20-25; Vicaire, 'Les Cathares albigeois vus par les polémistes', pp. 107-110.

lacking in the two earliest polemical treatises, Peter the Venerable's *Contra Petrobrusianos hereticos* (1131-33) and William the monk, *Contra Henricum schismaticum et hereticum* (1133-35). In practice, therefore, this study begins with Honorius Augustodunensis' *Liber de haeresibus* (early twelfth century), and ends with Peter of Pilichdorff's *Contra haeresim Waldensium tractatus* (1395). Within these chronological limits there are some texts which, although invaluable for the history of the heretics themselves, contain little or no information which is relevant to this thesis.¹⁰ In Chs 1 and 2 these limits have sometimes been exceeded, and material included which does not strictly fall into the category of 'polemical', in order to give as full a picture as possible of the basic characteristics of the medieval concept of heresy. It will become apparent from these self-imposed limits that the concept of heresy pursued in this thesis is the concept of 'popular' heresy. I have not dealt with so-called 'intellectual' heresy, since the sources for this area are directed more towards individuals than to providing a wider audience with general information.¹¹ Finally, I may be guilty at times of using the word 'heretic' too indiscriminately and of not distinguishing clearly enough between the different sects. If this is so, it can only be excused as to some extent inevitable in a study of a mindset which itself was careless about such distinctions.

¹⁰E. g. Gerhoch of Reichersberg, *Liber contra duas haereses*; Bonacursus, *Manifestatio* (1176-90), for which see Wakefield, 'Notes on Some Antiheretical Writings', pp. 292-93; Vacarius, *Liber contra errores* (1177-85); Ermengard of Beziers, *Contra haereticos* (1200-10), for which see Broeckx, *Le Catharisme*, pp. 215-16; Salvo Burci, *Liber supra Stella* (1235), study by Ilarino da Milano contained in a two-part article 'Il "Liber supra Stella" published prior to the text, brief discussion in Wakefield, 'Notes on Some Antiheretical Writings', p. 296; George, *Disputatio* (1240-50), study & partial version of the text in Ilarino da Milano, 'Fr. Gregorio', where he attributes the treatise to Bishop Gregory of Fano, although this identification is rejected by Dondaine, 'Le manuel', app. II (pp. 174-80) in favour of the anonymous 'George' (cf. Wakefield, 'Notes on Some Antiheretical Writings', pp. 297-99); Anonymous, *De heresi Catharorum*, text & study in Dondaine, 'La hiérarchie I'.

¹¹For discussion of action against 'intellectual' heresy see e.g. Aegerter, *Les hérésies du moyen âge*; Grundmann, *Ketzergeschichte des Mittelalters*, ch. 6.

The medieval concept of heresy rested on the theological and scriptural criteria which had early been developed in order to evaluate 'the truth'.¹² This had emerged in the 'Rule of Faith', the principle of interpretation first put forward by Irenaeus and developed by Tertullian. The Rule of Faith, the body of teaching handed down by apostolic succession, provided the means for the true interpretation of Scripture. Tertullian further argued that since the Scriptures were the possession of the Church, only the Church had the authority to be able to interpret them. However the Rule of Faith, even when combined with the baptismal creeds, could not provide an entirely infallible method of evaluating orthodoxy. Additional criteria were expounded in *Commonitorium* attributed to Vincent of Lérins. Vincent's famous and influential formula of *quod ubique, quod semper, et ab omnibus creditum est* became the standard test of orthodoxy, inherited and widely applied by the medieval Church. The evaluation of Catholic truth was to be governed by the principles of ecumenicity, antiquity and consensus. Vincent's insistence on antiquity as the basis of true doctrine bequeathed a horror of novelty - a cardinal sin - which was one of the hallmarks of the medieval Church; while his insistence on the common consent of the Church sowed the seeds of the steadily increasing emphasis which the medieval Church was to put upon its own authority and dictats as the deciding factor of orthodoxy.

The early definitions of heresy were essentially etymologically based. The Greek word *hairesis* was subject to many nuances of meaning, although the original idea of 'choice' was never lost. Whether heresy was taken to be false doctrine, a rejection of ecclesiastical authority, or a fusion of the two, the

¹²Peters, *Heresy and Authority*, ch. 1, provides a good introduction this area.

word still implied an individually chosen action. In the Hellenistic world, whilst still retaining its simple meaning, *hairesis* had also come to denote a school or system of thought, although without implying any kind of adverse judgement on that system. This was the sense which the primitive Church adopted; at what point the word first acquired its pejorative connotations, however, is not clear. It has been suggested that *hairesis* was a suspect concept from the first, designating schools or systems outside Christianity and the Church.¹³ Hence, *hairesis* 'does not owe its meaning to the development of an orthodoxy', but rather to its opposition to the concept of the Christian *ecclesia*.¹⁴ In other words choice, a perfectly rational and commendable action within the Hellenistic world, was inimical to Christianity, since the revelation of Jesus Christ had rendered all choice within the sphere of religion superfluous. Simon, on the other hand, links the development of the pejorative sense of *hairesis* to the emergence of the notion of orthodoxy, pointing to a parallel evolution of the term in Judaism. He also notes that in some of the oldest Christian writings, *hairesis* does not necessarily possess the sense of doctrinal deviation, although in some of the New Testament books and Apostolic Fathers this sense does become more pronounced.¹⁵ In the Patristic period the sense of *haeresis* as choice was dominant. Jerome, for example, defined heresy as occurring when someone chose to believe a particular doctrine or teaching purely on the basis of their own judgement. This scripturally-based definition viewed heresy essentially (although not entirely) as doctrinal deviation. After the second century, although there were many nuances in the terminology, heresy (doctrinal error) was generally seen as distinct from schism (orthodox dissent).¹⁶ For

¹³Schlier, 'Hairesis', p. 182.

¹⁴Schlier, 'Hairesis', pp. 182-83.

¹⁵Simon, 'From Greek Hairesis', p. 109.

¹⁶Greenslade, *Schism in the Early Church*, p. 22.

Isidore of Seville, schism arose from a malicious pleasure in stirring up dissension within the ecclesiastical community:

Schism (*schisma*) is so-called from the rending (*scissura*) of souls. For he believes in the same worship and the same rites as the rest, only he delights in dividing the congregation. For schism is created when men say: *We are the just, we can sanctify you who are impure*, and other similar things.¹⁷

Heresy, by contrast, he defines in keeping with Augustine's teaching as follows:

Haeresis in Greek is so-called from 'choice' (*electione*), namely because each person chooses for himself that which appears better to him, such as the philosophers the Peripatetics, the Academics, the Epicureans and the Stoics, or like those who, having given weight to false doctrines, leave the Church of their own will.¹⁸

Although there had naturally been some variations in the early definitions of heresy, Isidore's was essentially the concept which was bequeathed to the medieval Church. This concept of heresy was firmly contained within a doctrinal framework, and remained so for some time. Two principal strands of the medieval understanding of heresy were interwoven within this framework. The first strand was the idea that heresy, in the sense of erroneous doctrine, was a phenomenon which arose from outside the true Church, rather than within it. Error was not merely a corruption of the truth, rather a parallel but autonomous event, and so could not originate from inside the true Church which was the repository and mediator of the truth. This idea had arisen early on in the Church's history: Hegesippus had applied *haeresis*, in its pejorative sense, to Jewish sects, whilst Hippolytus had

¹⁷*Schisma a scissura animorum vocatum. Eodem enim cultu, eodemque ritu credit, ut caeteri, solo congregationis delectatur dissidio. Fit autem schisma, cum dicunt homines: Nos justi sumus, vos sanctificamus immundos, et caetera similia'. Etymologiae, VIII: iii (PL 182, 297).*

¹⁸*Haeresis Graece ab electione vocatur, quod, scilicet, unusquisque id sibi eligat quod melius sibi esse videtur, ut philosophi Peripatetici, Academici, Epicurei, et Stoici, vel sicut alii, qui, perversum dogma cogitantes, arbitrio suo de Ecclesia recesserunt'. Etymologiae, VIII: iii (PL 182, 295).*

traced the Christian heresies back not to Jewish sects but to the Greek philosophical schools, and pre-Christian systems of pagan thought.¹⁹ Heresy was therefore only a further degeneration in systems of thought which were already erroneous. This was articulated by Isidore who argued that heresy, in its primary sense of 'choice', could not originate from anything which contained the truth.²⁰ This belief had significant implications for the institutional Church's subsequent understanding of the heretical movements which began to emerge from the eleventh century onwards. The conviction that the roots of heresy lay outside the true Church meant that the ecclesiastical authorities fundamentally misunderstood the nature of those heretical movements, which arose (in part at least) from precisely those forces of spiritual renewal and reform which were endemic at the time within the medieval Church itself. Closely connected to this was a second idea, which was that the medieval heresies were nothing more or less than a recrudescence of the heresies that had attacked the early Church. Thus dualist heretics, for instance, were immediately assumed to be Manicheans, whilst others were described as Arians. This was a reversal of the position of the early Church Fathers who had viewed heresy as essentially modern and novel, as opposed to the truth which was ancient and therefore original. These two strands of thought combined in the minds of medieval polemicists to obscure the true nature of the medieval heresies, by drawing their attention away from the medieval Church, and reinforcing the preconceptions which they had inherited from the early Church heresiologists.

¹⁹Simon, 'From Greek Hairesis', pp. 102-103.

²⁰Simon, 'From Greek Hairesis', p. 104.

From the twelfth century onwards, the concept itself shows not so much alteration as an extension of its scope and application. Whilst the early Church posed the question 'what should we believe?', and formulated rules which governed the answer to that question, the medieval Church asked itself 'what sort of church should we have?' The theological definitions of heresy were not abandoned. As the Church's theological teachings became a more well-defined and coherent corpus, the dividing line between orthodox and heretical positions on established areas of doctrine inevitably became clearer. In a teleological society there would always be doctrinal grounds for condemning heresy; and they continued to be applied to, for instance, Berengar and Abelard. The profession of faith which was imposed on Valdes in 1181 shows the medieval Church's continuing concern with questionable theological doctrines.²¹ During the twelfth century, however, a process began which gradually enlarged the scope of the definitions, edging the concept over the doctrinal boundaries from which it had not previously strayed. Thus while the theological definitions were retained, and in some cases applied, the concept also began to expand into ecclesiastical and legal areas. This expansion was in line both with the consolidation of canon law which took place during the twelfth century, and also with the developing theory of papal monarchy; these two factors acting as catalysts which facilitated the extension the scope of heresy. Peter Damian and Gregory VII, for instance, widened heresy to cover the rejection of papal decretals; whilst the canonist Hugguccio stated that anyone who did not follow the orders of the Apostolic See, and persistently declared them not to be binding, was a heretic.²² As a result of the Investiture controversy Gratian came close to equating simony

²¹See Dondaine, 'Aux origines' for the text and study of Valdes' profession of faith.

²²Schindler, 'Häresie II', p. 327.

with heresy, as did Gerhoch of Reichersberg.²³ Although the identification which was made in practice between heresy and simony was disputed by canonists at the time, it gradually gained acceptance, and by the era of Innocent III was even customary.²⁴ The concept of heresy therefore came to place increasing emphasis upon contumacy, rather than erroneous doctrine, as the defining characteristic of heresy. In addition, we can detect a gradual merging of the concepts of schism and heresy, previously distinct. All these changes were reflected in papal and conciliar legislation: Lucius III's *Ad abolendam* (1184), Innocent III's *Vergentis in senium* (1199) and *Cum ex officii nostri* (1207), and the canons of the Third (1179) and Fourth Lateran Council (1215).

These threads were drawn together during the papacy of Innocent III. It is no coincidence that the most significant of the changes in the concept of heresy occurred during the pontificate of a man who many would argue took the medieval papacy to its zenith.²⁵ Innocent's uncompromising insistence on the primacy of papal jurisdiction, based on the possession of the *plenitudo potestatis* (generally taken to refer to the fullness of spiritual power) could not fail to have an effect upon the ways in which heresy and membership of the institutional Church were conceived. The more elevated and powerful the Pope, the greater the enormity of the offence of heresy. Innocent's view that heresy was equivalent to treason against God, and himself as God's representative, confirmed the shift. This theory was propounded in a decretal addressed to the clergy and people of Viterbo, *Vergentis in senium*

²³See Classen, 'Der Häresiebegriff bei Gerhoch von Reichersberg'.

²⁴Schindler, 'Häresie II', p. 326.

²⁵On Innocent's political theory and promotion of papal monarchy see, for example, Powell, *Innocent III: Vicar of Christ or Lord of the World?*; Sayers, *Innocent III*, ch. 2; Tillmann, *Pope Innocent III*, chs 2-5. Traditionally great weight has been given to Innocent's supposed training as a canon lawyer at Bologna; against this see Pennington, 'The Legal Education of Innocent III'.

(1199).²⁶ The crucial passage in *Vergentis* comes with Innocent's justification of the stringent penalties which the decretal lays down for heresy:

For since, according to lawful sanctions, those guilty of committing treason are executed, their goods confiscated, the life of their children spared merely through mercy; how much more ought those who, deviating in the faith of God, offend against God [and] Jesus Christ the son of God, to be cut off from our head, who is Christ, by ecclesiastical censure, and deprived of [their] temporal goods, since it is far more serious to commit treason against that which is eternal than that which is temporal.²⁷

The 'lawful sanctions' are in fact those of the Emperors Arcadius and Honorius contained in the Justinian Code, and set out in the chapter *Quisquis* in Gratian's *Decretum*; and *Quisquis* clearly provides at least some of the inspiration behind Innocent's decretal.²⁸ Above all it is with the social implications of heresy that *Vergentis* is concerned. The most worrying aspect of heresy was not so much its grip on the already decadent elements of society, but on 'the most worthy of creatures made to the image and likeness of the Maker'.²⁹ The problem is less with individual adherents who in general harm few but themselves and more with those whose position in the community means that their views command more respect. The primary provision of *Vergentis* was to apply the penalties which had been prescribed in Roman Law for treason against the Emperor to heretics.³⁰ The penalties

²⁶For discussion of this decretal see Maisonneuve, *Études sur les origines de l'Inquisition*, pp. 156-57, Pennington, "'Pro Peccatis Patrum Puniri'", pp. 138-40; Ullmann, 'The Significance of Innocent III's Decretal "Vergentis"'.
²⁷'Cum enim, secundum legitimas sanctiones, reis laesae majestatis punitis capite, bona confiscantur ipsorum, eorum filiis vita solummodo ex misericordia conservata; quanto magis, qui, aberrantes in fide [sic] Deum Dei Filium Jesum Christum offendunt, a capite nostro, quod est Christus, ecclesiastica debent districtione praecidi, et bonis temporalibus spoliari, cum longe sit gravius aeternam quam temporalem laedere majestatem'. *Vergentis*, (PL 214, 539).

²⁸Ullmann, 'The Significance of Innocent III's Decretal "Vergentis"', p. 730; Bévenot, 'The Inquisition and its Antecedents III', p. 61. It has also been suggested that Innocent was following the Roman lawyer Placentinus. See Pennington, "'Pro Peccatis Patrum Puniri'", p. 137.

²⁹'dignissima creaturarum ad imaginem et similitudinem condita Conditoris'. *Vergentis*, (PL 214, 537).

³⁰*Vergentis* laid down the confiscation of all goods belonging to heretics. They were to be declared infamous, barred from all public offices, and to be incapable of either making a

which it prescribed were not, therefore, devised by Innocent; what was new was their application to the crime of heresy when they had previously been restricted to the civil crime of treason. Although it is true that there was some dispute amongst canonists about these provisions, a few of which were altered in later legislation,³¹ the basic point had been established: heresy was treason against God, and against the Pope as Christ's vicar on earth. The heresy-treason equation achieved permanent ecclesiastical recognition when *Vergentis* was included in the great decretal collection of Gregory IX, the *Liber extra*.³²

The heresy-treason equation marks the turning point in the development of the medieval concept of heresy, and its consequences were severe. Not only did it make heresy a much more serious matter, but it transformed it from an ecclesiastical crime into a civil, social and very much more public crime, thus initiating the 'virtually limitless expansion of the concept of heresy, with ramifications into every department of social and public life'.³³ It was not just that heresy was a denial of the authority of the institutional Church; within the context of a feudal and hierarchical society it constituted a defiance of all the lawful authorities, of both the spiritual and the temporal swords. The concept of a united Christendom meant that both the papacy and secular rulers were much more concerned to maintain society as a whole, rather than

will, or themselves inheriting. Although the punishments prescribed appear harsh, there were in fact some significant omissions from the Roman Civil law, which mitigated some of its harshness. Most importantly, *Vergentis* nowhere prescribes the death penalty for heresy, although Roman law had decreed the death penalty for treason. Rather, it is excommunication which is equated with the death penalty for treason; the civil law is used only as a basis for the confiscation of goods. The penalties were extended even to the orthodox children of heretics, but the decretal omitted the strictest provision of the original Roman law, which had prevented sons from inheriting not only from their fathers, but from anyone else at all.

³¹For these see Pennington, "'Pro Peccatis Patrum Puniri'", pp. 140-45..

³²X 5. 7. 10 (Friedberg, vol. II, col. 782-83).

³³Ullmann, *Historical Introduction*, p. 27.

the rights of individuals. Individuals did not in any case possess inalienable human rights, but only those which they held by virtue of being a Christian and a member of the Church. By deviating from the faith and questioning the Church's authority, an individual 'wilfully divested himself of that grace which had raised him to be a Christian',³⁴ and put himself outside the protection which was due to members of the Church.

The principal change which the medieval concept of heresy underwent was ecclesiological. The medieval Church's assertion of its supreme authority over both clergy and laity drew attention towards the institutional structures of the Church. Heresy came to be defined, therefore, almost exclusively on the basis of the individual's attitude towards the authority of the Church and its hierarchy. As the Church became increasingly concerned with its own doctrinal understanding the defining characteristic of heresy came to be the defiance of legitimate ecclesiastical authority - hence the gradual merging of the concepts of schism and heresy during this period. This meant that the significance of the individual's doctrinal error receded, which, when combined with changing ideas about the nature and powers of the Devil, stimulated the polemicists' intense focus on the nature of the heretic. All of this resulted in a concept of heresy in which all heretics were viewed as essentially the same; and so conditions were ripe for the 'making of heresies':

As the frequency of heresy increased, the conventions for portraying it also became more familiar. They began to fit into a minor historiographical tradition of their own, in which, invariably, an attempt was made to see sectarianism in a coherent framework interrelating the past and the present. The result was the 'making of heresies,' that is, the placing of relatively isolated event in a literary format of shared assumptions among authors and readers. This approach

³⁴Ullmann, *Historical Introduction*, p. 38.

confirmed the orthodox view that heresy was something well-known and therefore curable with ancient remedies.³⁵

Stock pinpoints the process by which the concept of heresy and the heretic began to be assimilated into a 'supernatural' framework to as early as the eleventh century. Just as the medieval concept of the Church was situated within the wider scheme of salvation history, so the concept of heresy came to be seen within the wider framework of diabolical history.

To understand why the stereotype of a Devil-worshipping sect emerged at all, why it exercised such fascination and why it survived so long, one must look not at the belief or behaviour of heretics, Dualist or other, but into the minds of the orthodox themselves. Many people, and particularly many priests and monks were becoming more and more obsessed by the overwhelming power of the Devil and his demons. That is why their idea of the absolutely evil and anti-human came to include Devil-worship, alongside incest, infanticide and cannibalism.

But how did this preoccupation with the Devil ever start? How did it turn into such a terrifying obsession? How, above all, could it be believed that Christendom was threatened by a conspiracy of human beings under the Devil's direct command? This chapter in the history of the European psyche deserves more than a passing glance.³⁶

Together these indicate the task before us - the elucidation of the medieval notion of heresy and an examination of the conceptual framework which surrounded that notion.

Notes on the Sources

Anti-heretical treatises were not, of course, a phenomenon exclusive to the later Middle Ages. There were polemical treatises existing from earlier centuries and struggles - for example the *Treatise of Cosmas the Priest against the Bogomils* (c. 972) - although there seems little evidence that the later medieval polemicists were familiar with such works. They preferred to look

³⁵Stock, *The Implications of Literacy*, p. 46.

³⁶Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, p. 78.

further back, to the works of Augustine which were to prove such valuable a store of information, in order to arm them against the heretics which they were facing. There is no single secondary work which deals systematically with all of the medieval polemical literature. Rottenwöhler's *Der Katharismus* provides a comprehensive analysis of the polemical sources for the Cathars.³⁷ Wakefield's survey provides some indication of the range of polemical texts which exist for the thirteenth century.³⁸ A few works give surveys of various sources,³⁹ but only Borst comes close to a systematic, albeit brief, analysis of polemical literature as a genre in its own right. He divides the sources into various categories: the critical polemicists (c. 1160-1230), the systematic scholastics (c. 1230-1250) and the Inquisitors;⁴⁰ taking 'polemical' in the very narrowest sense possible. A substantial amount of secondary literature exists concerning individual treatises, but this considers almost exclusively the question of what light polemical writings can shed on the doctrines and practices of heretical groups. Nevertheless, although we are considering polemical treatises from a different perspective, there are important textual and biographical points which should be noted. What follows is a brief survey of the sources of which this study has made greatest use. The most striking fact which arises from this is the complexity of the inter-relationships between all the texts; the way in which each generation of polemicists drew on the work of the previous one, ensuring a steady transmission not only of language and metaphor, but of fundamental ideas about the nature of heresy and the heretic.

³⁷Vol. I: *Quellen zum Katharismus*. Section 1, B (pp. 48-91) of this volume contains a list of the polemical sources; section 2, B (pp. 71-296) contains comment and annotations on the texts. Inquisitorial sources are dealt with separately in section 1, C.

³⁸'Notes on some Antiheretical Writings of the Thirteenth Century'.

³⁹E. g. Broeckx, *Le Catharisme*, pp. 202-35; Molinier, *L'Inquisition*; Schmidt, *Histoire et doctrine*, vol. II, pp. 51; Thouzellier, *Catharisme et Valdésisme*.

⁴⁰*Die Katharer*, pp. 20-34.

From the second half of the twelfth century comes a group of sermons: Bernard of Clairvaux's *Sermones super Cantica Canticorum*, the sermons against heresy of the German preacher, Berthold of Regensburg, and *Homilia IX* by Ralph the Ardent. The details of Bernard's life are sufficiently well-known not to require recapitulation here.⁴¹ The particular sermons with which we are dealing are significant for their relationship with another piece of evidence for the appearance of heresy in the west. Sermons 63-64 of this collection deal with the problems afflicting Bernard's own monastic community, cast in the evocative imagery of 'the little foxes'. After preaching these two sermons Bernard received a letter from Eberwin of Steinfeld, which informed him that heretics had recently appeared in Cologne, outlining their beliefs and asking Bernard to preach against these heretics.⁴² Bernard consequently developed his previous theme, suitably adapted to heretics rather than recalcitrant monks, in Sermons 65 and 66. Berthold of Regensburg is less well-known, perhaps, than Bernard, but he was nevertheless one of the most prolific and popular preachers of the Middle Ages.⁴³ A Franciscan (and incidentally a colleague of David of Augsburg), his preaching activities from the 1240's to his death in 1272 took him all over Germany and into Switzerland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. In 1263 he was commissioned by Urban IV to preach against heresy in Germany and Switzerland. Berthold was well-acquainted with Scripture and the Fathers, and with the works of Bernard of Clairvaux, yet the sermons are simple and well-tailored to the intellectual capacities of their audience. It is known that Berthold did preach in German, but these sermons have not survived,

⁴¹Dictionary entries in *DTC*, *NCE*, *TRE*. See also Congar, 'L'ecclésiologie de S. Bernard'; Leclercq, 'L'hérésie d'après S. Bernard de Clairvaux'.

⁴²*Epistola ad S. Bernardum* (PL 182, 675-80). On the significance of Eberwin's evidence see Moore, *Origins of European Dissent*, pp. 169-71.

⁴³Dictionary entries in *NCE*, *TRE*. The best study of Berthold is Schönbach, *Das Wirken Bertholds von Regensburg*.

although some Latin translations may have done so. From Ralph the Ardent's homilies comes the last sermon in this group, written against certain 'Manicheans'.⁴⁴ These sermons can scarcely be described as detailed and theoretical considerations of the nature of heresy; but for our purposes they provide an invaluable insight into the concept of heresy which popular preachers put forward to the laity, and the metaphors and language which they deployed in order to warn them about the dangers of heresy. More systematic in approach are the later sermons of the Dominican preacher Stephen of Bourbon.⁴⁵ The sermons *De septem donis Spiritus Sancti* are organised according to the theoretical structure of the seven virtues and vices (although he reached only the fifth by his death in 1271), the section on heresy falling within sermons on pride.⁴⁶ His anecdotes and observations about the Waldensians, although written some time after Valdes, were based in some instances on eye-witnesses to whom he had spoken. The section on the origins of the Cathars, on the other hand, is quite clearly based on a corresponding passage in Eckbert of Schönau's *Sermones contra Catharos*. The tone of the sermons is strongly polemical, providing a particularly vivid example of the language and imagery of heresy.

Few biographical details exist for the two earliest polemicists. Very little is known about the popular early twelfth-century theologian, possibly a Benedictine monk, Honorius Augustodunensis (c. 1080-1156). Recently even the traditional translation of 'Augustodunensis' as 'of Autun' has been questioned - this is probably a pseudonym - and his centre of activity is now thought to have been at Regensburg. His *Liber de haeresibus*, a catalogue of

⁴⁴*Homilia IX* (PL 155, 2010-13).

⁴⁵Sometimes called de Belleville. See Broeckx, *Le Catharisme*, pp. 223-24. Extracts from the *De septem donis Spiritus Sancti* are translated in Wakefield & Evans, pp. 208-10 & 346-51.

⁴⁶Lecoy de la Marche, pp. 274-314. See Broeckx, *Le Catharisme*, pp. 223-24.

Christian heresies which was essentially a reproduction of a similar list contained in Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*, must have been intended to complement his *De luminaribus ecclesiae*, a catalogue of luminaries of the Christian Church (including twenty-one of his own works!).⁴⁷ Hugh of Amiens' *Contra haereticos sui temporis sive de ecclesia et ejus ministris libri tres* was probably written around 1145-46 against either the Petrobrusians or the Henricians.⁴⁸ It has been somewhat neglected by the historians of heresy; perhaps understandably, as Hugh's discussion of the nature of the Church and its sacraments contains virtually no information about heretical practices or beliefs. It is a curiously speculative work, typifying the medieval passion for thinking in symbols and parallels; and bearing little resemblance to other polemicists' treatment of the same subject. Its highly theoretical approach to the refutation of heresy is unusual at this early stage in the development of polemical literature; even more significant is Hugh's grasp of the crucial importance of ecclesiology for the refutation of heretical doctrines.

Two polemical treatises written in the second half of the twelfth century, Eckbert of Schönau's *Tresdecim sermones contra Catharos* (c.1163)⁴⁹ and Bernard of Fontcaude's *Adversus Waldensium sectam liber* (c.1190),⁵⁰ make an

⁴⁷Dictionary articles in *DTC*, *NCE*, *ODCC*, *TRE*. Some discussion in Grundmann, 'Oportet', pp. 336-38.

⁴⁸See the entry in *DTC*.

⁴⁹The standard study of the *Sermones* is Manselli, 'Ecberto di Schönau e l'eresia catara'. A newer study, together with a textual edition which supersedes Migne's, is contained in Harrison, *Eckbert of Schonau's Sermones contra Kataros*; see vol. I, ch. 1 for biography of Eckbert; for dictionary articles see entries in *DLM*, *DTC LTK*, *NCE*, *NDB*. I have used Harrison's edition of the text. Brief discussion in Broeckx, *Le Catharisme*, pp. 209-14; Russell, *Dissent and Reform*, pp. 220-24; Thouzellier, 'Hérésie et croisade', pp. 25-29. Discussion of Eckbert's (possibly earliest) use of the word 'Cathar' in Duvernoy & Thouzellier, 'Une Controverse sur l'origine du mot "Cathares"'. Sections of the *Sermones* are translated in Moore, *The Birth of Popular Heresy*, pp. 88-94, & Russell, *Religious Dissent in the Middle Ages*, pp. 63-68.

⁵⁰The best study of Bernard's treatise is Verrees, 'Le traité de l'abbé Bernard de Fontcaude; brief biography pp. 7-10. For dictionary articles see *LTK*, *NCE*. See also Gonnet, 'Le Cheminement des Vaudois', pp. 321-23; Molnar, *Die Waldenser*, pp. 53-57; Thouzellier, *Catharisme et Valdésisme*, pp. 49-59; Valvekens, 'Bernardus Fontis Calidi', pp. 143-46. A misleading attempt to reconstruct the dialogue of the debate in which Bernard participated

interesting comparison. The works are similar in background and purpose, although the geographical context is different, Eckbert being concerned with Cathars in the Rhineland, Bernard with Waldensians in Narbonne. It is significant that the religious situations in southern France and Rhineland were quite dissimilar. Bernard was an abbot in a diocese which was rife with heretical activity, not just of the Waldensians, but also of the Cathars - both of whom had proved enormously successful in drawing people away from the Church. In spite of this, or perhaps because of it, episcopal organisation in this area was comparatively strong. In Germany, on the other hand, Catharism never really firmly established itself, even in the Rhineland; and was never the settled phenomenon which it was in southern France and northern Italy. Episcopal organisation and activity in Germany was very weak; an important factor, since the onus of seeking out heretics and prosecuting them was on the bishops. In Germany, therefore, 'the problem of heretics was not so overwhelmingly clear and serious a threat to the Church. There were almost certainly fewer heretics, though the contrast is impossible to establish statistically. In any event, heresy was not perceived as such an overwhelming danger, at least in ordinary times'.⁵¹ While Bernard was dealing with well established heretics whose following has assumed such proportions as to present a serious threat to ecclesiastical authority, Eckbert was dealing much more with a series of isolated incidents.

Both treatises claim to be based on a direct and personal knowledge of the heretics in question. Eckbert's treatise is not a direct report of a dispute, although he had been involved in such debates, but is rather the culmination of various encounters with Cathars, some when he was a canon at Bonn,

is contained in Comba, *History of the Waldenses of Italy*, pp. 47-52. For a more useful translation of the text see Wakefield & Evans, pp. 210-13.

⁵¹Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy in Medieval Germany*, p. 6.

others (after his entry into a Benedictine foundation at Schönau) at Cologne where he had been summoned to a debate by the Archbishop. He was impressed by the array of scriptural quotations which the Cologne Cathars in particular marshalled to their defence, and by the fluency of their arguments. Like Bernard some twenty seven years later, he realised that it was the clergy who were in the forefront of the fight against heresy, and considered the general ineffectiveness of the clerical response to be shameful. He therefore aimed to give an account of Cathar beliefs and the arguments against them, principally for the benefit and use of the clergy. Bernard's treatise is almost certainly a report of a debate between Catholics and Waldensians which he attended. The Waldensians had already been condemned by Lucius III in 1184 through the general condemnation contained in the papal bull *Ad Abolendam*. In spite of this the group continued their activities, including unauthorised preaching; and gained enough support to persuade Archbishop Bernard of Narbonne to arrange a further debate between Catholics and Waldensians. This debate was attended by Bernard, the abbot of a Premonstratensian house at Fontcaude (*Fons Caldis*) - an order which already had a history of working to combat heresy. Bernard undertook to write a report of the debate, which again condemned the Waldensians, and to present the points which the heretics put forward and the arguments with which the Catholics had countered them. Bernard makes it clear, however, that the work is aimed primarily at the clergy who were having to deal on a practical level with heretics in their parishes. Either through inexperience, or through a lack of books, the clergy were failing to curb the spread of heresy in their parishes. He therefore intended to familiarise the clergy with the opinions and justifications of the heretics, and to provide them with an armoury of quotations from Scripture and the Fathers which they could use to defend the Catholic faith.

Far removed from these two treatises is the Cistercian Alan of Lille's *De fide catholica contra haereticos sui temporis liber quatuor* (1190-1202), which probably arose from his experiences whilst living in the Midi during the years 1171-85.⁵² As a scholastic work its methodology is distinct from that of the polemical texts which predate it. It is not a simple account of heretical doctrines but a 'scholastic exercise applied to religious polemic; a dry and cold statement of a theologian who, trained in dialectics, established catholic doctrine in the face of the heresies which were spreading at the end of the twelfth century'.⁵³ It must nevertheless have been immensely popular, given that over thirty manuscripts of the text survive.⁵⁴ The treatise is divided into four books, against the Cathars, Waldensians, Jews and pagans (here Muslims) respectively; the inclusion of Jews and pagans in a book written against heretics is itself unusual. In spite of its measured and carefully considered arguments, however, the treatise is still highly polemical in tone, although most of Alan's venom is reserved for the Waldensians. Wakefield notes that the treatise 'is important, not only for its revelation of heretical doctrine, which the author probably knew from personal experience, but also for its methodological rebuttal, which inaugurated a pattern followed by later controversialist writers'.⁵⁵ Alan's treatise was plundered by his

⁵²This is the title given by Migne but the work is also known as the *Quadripartita magistri Alani contra hereticos*. In its abbreviated form the work is generally known as the *Contra haereticos*, but in view of the number of works with that title which this study has used, I have abbreviated the title to *De fide catholica*. For a general survey of Alan and his work see Glorieux, 'Alain de Lille'; for dictionary articles see entries in *DTC*, *LTK*, *NCE*, *TRE*. On the *De fide catholica*, see Broeckx, *Le Catharisme*, pp. 216-20; Roché, "'Le Contra haereticos" d'Alain de Lille'; Thouzellier, *Catharisme et Valdésisme*, ch. 3; Vasoli, 'Il "Contra haereticos" di Alano di Lilla'; Wakefield, 'Notes on Some Antiheretical Writings', pp. 285-90. Sections of the treatise are translated in Russell, *Religious Dissent*, pp. 52-53; Wakefield & Evans, pp. 214-20.

⁵³'...mais un exercice scholastique appliqué à une polémique religieuse; rapport sec et froid d'un théologien qui, rompu à la dialectique, fixe la doctrine catholique face aux hérésies répandues à la fin du XII^e siècles'. Thouzellier, *Catharisme et Valdésisme*, p. 83.

⁵⁴See Wakefield & Evans, p. 712, n. 3.

⁵⁵Wakefield, 'Notes on Some Antiheretical Writings', p. 287.

successors, often at the cost of his incisive arguments and the distinctions which he was careful to preserve between his different opponents.⁵⁶

From this point on the textual history of polemical treatises and the interdependence between them become more complex; a situation highlighted by the new texts which were discovered in the period after the Second World War. These were most significant in the case of Durand of Huesca, a Waldensian and anti-Cathar polemicist, who subsequently reconverted to Catholicism. The work of Dondaine, Thouzellier and Selge means that we possess not only important sources for the early history of the Waldensians, but critical editions of two of the most important polemical works of the Middle Ages: Durand's *Liber antiheresis* and *Liber contra Manicheos*. Dondaine first mentioned the *Liber contra Manicheos* in 'Nouvelles sources'. In 'Durand de Huesca et la polémique anti-cathare', he identified a further work, the *Liber antiheresis* - to which he had previously drawn attention in 'Aux origines' - as being written by Durand before his reconversion. The dating of Durand's treatises, a task complicated by his reconversion and subsequent revision of some of his work, has not yet been finally established. The *Liber antiheresis* was probably written sometime before 1207; the *Contra Manicheos* around 1223-24. Another work, entitled *Opusculum contra hereticos* (c. 1210-15) has been attributed to Durand. Like other polemicists, Durand used Gratian's *Decretum* and Isidore's *Etymologiae* as well as Patristic authorities. He was certainly familiar with Alan of Lille's *De fide catholica*, from which he quotes in a number of instances in the *Liber antiheresis*, and possibly with Bernard of Fontcaude's *Adversus Waldensium*

⁵⁶See e. g. Conybeare, 'A Hitherto Unpublished Treatise', which gives a partial and unattributed edition of a polemical treatise which Wakefield identifies as being mainly taken from the first two books of Alan's *De fide catholica* ('Notes on Some Antiheretical Writings', p. 286).

sectam. Durand's works themselves became important sources for later polemicists. The *Liber antiheresis* is textually closely linked to Ermengard of Beziers' *Contra hereticos*,⁵⁷ and sections from that work were certainly copied by Moneta of Cremona and Benedict of Alignan.

For some polemicists there are few available textual or biographical details. One such is Ebrard of Béthune, who wrote a treatise some time around 1212 entitled *Liber antiheresis* against unspecified dualist heretics, who undoubtedly were the Cathars, although he confuses these with the Waldensians.⁵⁸ Another is Peter of Pilichdorff, whose treatise *Contra haeresim Waldensium tractatus* was written about 1395. An extract from this treatise is translated in Melia's collections of documents about the Waldensians, but he gives no biographical details.⁵⁹ Peter was one of the first professors at the University of Vienna (founded 1365), becoming dean of the Faculty of Theology in 1401-02, but little else is known about his life.

One of the most important of all the polemical works, representing as it does a consolidation of all previous treatises, is Moneta of Cremona's monumental work *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses* (c. 1241-44).⁶⁰ Moneta was a professor of philosophy at Bologna who was called to the religious life after hearing a sermon preached by the Dean of Orleans, and so entered the Dominican order. There is some suggestion that Moneta may have been an inquisitor,⁶¹

⁵⁷See Broeckx, *Le Catharisme*, pp. 215-16. Brief entry in *DTC*. For the relationship of Ermengard's work to Durand's, see Thouzellier, 'Le "Liber antiheresis" de Durand de Huesca et le "Contra hereticos" d'Ermengaud de Beziers'; Wakefield, 'Notes on Some Antiheretical Writings', pp. 290-92.

⁵⁸See Broeckx, *Le Catharisme*, pp. 221-22; some mention in Borst, *Die Katharer*, p. 22. Brief entry in *DTC*, *LTK*.

⁵⁹Melia, *Origins, Persecutions and Doctrines of the Waldenses*, pp. 21-25.

⁶⁰For biography of Moneta, see Wakefield & Evans, pp. 307-308; dictionary entries in *DTC*, *LTK*. Some discussion in Broeckx, *Le Catharisme*, pp. 228-32.

⁶¹E. g. Broeckx, *Le Catharisme*, p. 229.

although the evidence for this is slight, but he certainly spent much of his time preaching against heresy. His treatise is a vast work, comprising a detailed description and point-by-point refutation of heretical errors, organised into their various theological categories. Books I and II consist of a description of Cathar and Waldensian beliefs, and the Catholic reply to each error, covering such matters as the doctrine of two principles, the status of the Old Testament and its prophets and the persons of the Trinity. Books III and IV deal with the person of Christ, the sacraments and the Resurrection. Book V - for our purposes the most significant - is devoted to the nature of the Catholic Church. It is in this section that Moneta considers the origins of the Waldensians and Cathars, an integral part of his strategy for proving that they are not the true Church. Moneta drew on a vast range of sources for his work, including earlier polemical works such as George's *Disputatio* as well as contemporary theologians and preachers.⁶²

Included here in the category of polemical writers, although not structurally similar to the other polemical treatises, is the work of Benedict of Alignan, abbot of Notre-Dame de la Grasse.⁶³ During the period between his translation to the bishopric of Marseille in 1229 and his entry into the Franciscan order in 1267, he travelled around the Holy Land and the East. His treatise *Tractatus fidei contra diversos errores super titulum de summa trinitate et fide catholica in decretalibus* (1261), is an extensive commentary on the first canon of the Fourth Lateran Council and 'Although not cast in the usual form of the thirteenth century treatises against heresy, it belongs in

⁶²On sources for the *Adversos Catharos et Valdenses*, see Wakefield, 'Notes on Some Antiheretical Writings', pp. 297-99 & 305-15.

⁶³Very few biographical details are known for Benedict; even Grabmann has little to say on the matter. See his 'Der Franziskanerbischof Benedictus de Alignano', p. 50; brief entry in *LTK*.

that tradition'.⁶⁴ The structure of the treatise has been analysed by Grabmann: part one deals with teaching about God and the Trinity, creation, angels and demons, part two with Christology and soteriology and part three with the nature of the Church and the sacraments.⁶⁵ In the course of this he refutes numerous ancient and new errors. The textual history of the treatise is complicated. Grabmann surveys seventeen manuscripts,⁶⁶ which textually vary considerably - the Munich manuscript which has been used for this study, for example, incorporates passages from Moneta of Cremona's work and the *Brevis Summula*.⁶⁷ In addition some manuscripts contain short appendices.⁶⁸ It is doubtful whether these can be definitely attributed to Benedict, although Douais seems sure that the first appendix is the work of Benedict and that the others, if not from his own pen, were at least appropriated by him.

The last of the polemical treatises is the *Collyrium fidei adversus hereses* (1344). Its author, Alvarus Pelagius, was a Franciscan lawyer who was made bishop of Silves in Portugal in 1332.⁶⁹ The *Collyrium* reproduces Gratian's catalogue of heresies, itself taken from Isidore of Seville's own catalogue, to which he adds his own comments and annotations. In addition to the *Collyrium fidei* he wrote several political works, including a defence of John XXII's papacy against Marsilius of Padua and Louis IV of Bavaria: the *De statu et planctu ecclesiae* (written and revised between 1330 and 1340).

⁶⁴Wakefield, 'Notes on Some Antiheretical Writings', p. 316.

⁶⁵'Der Franziskanerbischof Benedictus de Alignano', pp. 55-59.

⁶⁶'Der Franziskanerbischof Benedictus de Alignano', pp. 51-53.

⁶⁷A late 13th-century compilation of texts intended for use in the intellectual fight against heresy and especially for the use of preachers. See Wakefield & Evans, pp. 351-61.

⁶⁸Douais, 'Cinq pièces inédites', pp. 367-68, gives transcriptions of the appendices contained in Paris, BN, cod. lat. 4224.

⁶⁹See the entry in the *NEC* for biography. Brief discussion of the *Collyrium fidei* and the *Speculum Regum* in Scholz, *Unbekannte kirchenpolitische Streitschriften*, vol. I, pp. 197-207.

We come now to a body of sources which are technically distinct, but are nevertheless included in this study for reasons explained in the Introduction; that of inquisitors' literature.⁷⁰ Dondaine divides this literature into four categories: collections for the information of other inquisitors, manuals without formularies, manuals with formularies and what he calls 'reasoned' treatises. He is careful to distinguish the first category from the true inquisitor's manual; although identical in purpose, the collections are made up of all sorts of documents about heresy and the Inquisition, whilst the manuals are compiled specifically from the point of view of the exercise of the inquisitorial function.⁷¹

Within the first category of inquisitorial collections fall the *Summa de Catharis et Pauperibus de Lugduno* (c. 1250) of Reinerius Sacconi and the *De inquisicione hereticorum* attributed to David of Augsburg. Reinerius was a former Cathar who was reconverted under the influence of Peter Martyr of Verona, became a Dominican, and who with the typical convert's zeal then became an inquisitor. In 1252 he narrowly escaped the fate which befell Peter Martyr at the hands of assassins. His *Summa*, although containing little material pertinent to this thesis, was extremely popular and highly influential, being extensively pillaged by other authors.⁷² The Pseudo-David treatise has been dated by its editor Preger to between 1256 and 1272. A shorter, possibly earlier, version of this treatise was printed by Martène and Durand.⁷³ In that collection it is anonymous, and the subsequent attribution to David of

⁷⁰The most complete analysis of inquisitors' manuals is contained in Dondaine, 'Le manuel'. Molinier, *L'Inquisition*, gives an extensive survey of documents (published and unpublished) relating to the inquisitorial process. See also Borst, *Die Katharer*, pp. 30-34; Broeckx, *Le Catharisme*, pp. 204-208.

⁷¹Dondaine, 'Le manuel', p. 88.

⁷²On Reinerius, see Broeckx, *Le Catharisme*, pp. 226-28; Dondaine, 'Le manuel', p. 93 & app. I (pp. 170-74). See also the entry in *DTC*.

⁷³Martène & Durand, vol. 5, cols 1177-194.

Augsburg is in any case uncertain.⁷⁴ The second category (manuals without formularies) includes Raymond of Penafort's Directory for inquisitors;⁷⁵ the third (manuals with formularies) the anonymous *Doctrina de modo procedendi contra hereticos*.⁷⁶

More familiar is the treatise in Dondaine's last category of 'reasoned' treatises, Bernard Gui's *Practica inquisitionis* (c. 1323-24, although part IV may have been written as early as 1314).⁷⁷ Bernard was one of the many Dominicans who became inquisitors, but also one of the most prominent and longest-serving of the medieval inquisitors. In Dondaine's eyes, the *Practica* unites all the essential precepts and details of the earlier collections and manuals.⁷⁸ Parts I-III consist of formularies (the forms appropriate to each sect which should be used for interrogations, abjurations, excommunications and so on). Part IV is to a large extent plundered from an earlier work entitled *De auctoritate et forma inquisitionis*.⁷⁹ The fifth and final part is in many ways the most interesting - at least for the purposes of this study - and comprises the work edited by Mollat. Uniquely amongst inquisitors' manuals, this section gives full details of the origins, beliefs and practices of the sects with which Bernard considers other inquisitors ought to be acquainted. Following an *Instructio generalis*, this part of the *Practica* deals in turn with the Cathars (here described as the present-day Manicheans), the Waldensians, the Pseudo-Apostles, the Beguins and 'perfidious' Jews. The section concludes with the appropriate form of abjuration for each of these

⁷⁴See Dondaine, 'Le manuel', pp. 93-94, 104-105 & app. III (pp. 180-183).

⁷⁵Dondaine, 'Le manuel', pp. 96-97. Dictionary entry in *DTC*, *NCE*.

⁷⁶Dondaine, 'Le manuel', pp. 108-111.

⁷⁷Dondaine, 'Le manuel', pp. 115-17; Molinier, *L'Inquisition*, part III, ch. V. Brief mention in Wakefield, 'Notes on Some Antiheretical Writings', p. 318; fuller discussion in Wakefield & Evans, pp. 373-75. Brief biography in Mollat, vol. I, p. vi; dictionary entries in *LTK*, *NCE*.

⁷⁸'Le manuel', p. 116.

⁷⁹Dondaine, 'Le manuel', p. 116.

groups. At the end of the *Practica* are attached some appendices, covering diverse matters which Bernard considers of possible use to other inquisitors.⁸⁰ The *Practica* draws extensively on other sources; parts I-IV, for example, make use of notarial formularies from episcopal inquisitions in southern France, whilst part V shows that Bernard was certainly familiar with Stephen of Bourbon's *De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, George's *Disputatio inter Catholicum et Paterinum hereticum* and Pseudo-David of Augsburg's *De inquisicione hereticorum*. There are also certain resemblances with Reinerius Sacconi's *Summa*.⁸¹

Finally we come to three inquisitors' manuals not included in Dondaine's survey. The first is the *Summa contra hereticos* (c. 1235) attributed to Peter Martyr of Verona, the second is Anselm of Alessandria's *Tractatus de hereticis* (1260-70) and the third is the compilation made by the Anonymous of Passau (c. 1260-1270). Peter Martyr came from a heretical family in Italy, but like so many others was converted to Catholicism and entered the Dominican order, being appointed as inquisitor to Milan in 1251. After only a year he was assassinated by some Cathars and was canonised in 1253.⁸² The *Summa* is divided into four books which deal with the principal tenets of the Cathars,⁸³ to whom it almost always refers as Patarenes. Although incomplete, it is systematic in its approach to the refutation of heretical doctrines. The *Tractatus de hereticis* of the Lombardy inquisitor Anselm of Alessandria,⁸⁴ discovered and edited by Dondaine after the publication of 'Le manuel' in

⁸⁰See Mollat, vol. I, pp. vii-xi for a more detailed analysis of the structure of the *Practica*.

⁸¹Mollat, vol. I, pp. xvi-xxv.

⁸²The best study of Peter Martyr, including discussion of the hagiographical sources, is Dondaine, 'Saint Pierre Martyr'; see also the entry in the ODCC; brief mention in Wakefield, 'Notes on Some Antiheretical Writings', p. 297. An edition of the *Summa contra hereticos* and comment is contained in Käppeli, 'Une somme'. The attribution of the *Summa* to Peter Martyr has not been fixed beyond all doubt, but is generally accepted.

⁸³For analysis of the *Summa*, see Käppeli, 'Une somme', pp. 296-302.

⁸⁴For Anselm's biography, see Dondaine, 'La hiérarchie II', pp. 260-62.

1950, is without doubt one of the most significant treatises of this period. Not only did it contain detailed material relevant to the development of Catharism and its hierarchy specifically in Italy, but the new evidence which it presented concerning the origins of the Cathars and their subsequent diffusion into the rest of Europe was seized upon by the post-war historians of heresy, and so rekindled the debate about the origins of western heresy. Technically speaking, Dondaine considers the treatise as falling into the category of collections for the information of inquisitors, with the added value of forming a supplement to the *Summa* of Reinerius Sacconi, who was Anselm's inquisitorial superior.⁸⁵ Dondaine analyses the structure of the treatise in detail;⁸⁶ for our purposes the most important section is the first, which deals with the origins of the Cathars.

The Anonymous of Passau's treatise - or rather collection - stands in a class of its own. It is most significant for its highly theoretical nature, in contrast to the majority of medieval polemical works. Given the enormous popularity of the treatise, and of its shortened form, the Pseudo-Reinerius treatise, this must have been one of the most widely disseminated and influential polemical works during the Middle Ages. The treatise is essentially a compilation of shorter treatises and authorities directed against heretics, Jews, and Muslims, probably written by an inquisitor or someone connected with the Inquisition in the diocese of Passau between the years of 1260 and 1270. It exists in a long (c. 1270-73) and a short (c. 1260-66) recension. From sections five, seven and eleven of the longer recension of the Anonymous of Passau treatise derives a shorter work which was previously attributed incorrectly to the inquisitor Reinerius Sacconi. This 'Pseudo-Reinerius'

⁸⁵Dondaine, 'La hiérarchie II', p. 234.

⁸⁶'La hiérarchie II', pp. 235-38.

treatise itself exists in a long and a short recension.⁸⁷ Nickson sums up the complex textual history of the treatises thus:

The compiler of the Anonymous of Passau treatise was thus in all probability a cleric charged with the inquisition in the diocese of Passau, who in the 1260's was engaged in compiling a work on the enemies of the Catholic faith, particularly Jews and heretics. This work was afterwards revised and augmented, perhaps to some extent by himself, a longer version being prepared some time after 1270. This provided the basis for the Pseudo-Reinerius treatise, but it is doubtful whether this very much shortened version was prepared by the Anonymous of Passau himself as it contains many misreadings and omissions. Like the longer work, however, it was undoubtedly prepared in connection with the inquisition in the diocese of Passau, which gradually became more effective from the early fourteenth century onwards.⁸⁸

There is no complete published text of the Anonymous of Passau treatise, although Patschovsky has collated the extant manuscripts and the various individual works which make up the compilation.⁸⁹ Some discrete treatises by other authors which are contained within the compilation have been published in critical editions elsewhere. Reinerius Sacconi's *Summa de Catharis et Pauperibus de Lugduno*, for example, has been published by both Dondaine⁹⁰ and Sanjek,⁹¹ the *Rescriptum heresiarcharum Lombardie ad Leonistas in Alemania* by Patschovsky and Selge⁹² and the *Compilatio de novo spiritu* by Preger.⁹³ Various other extracts have been published in collections of sources.⁹⁴ Some sections were printed by Flacius Illyricus under the title *De Vualdensibus, et eorum doctrina, ex veteri codice desumptum: Haeresis septem sunt*

⁸⁷For the relationship between the two works see Nickson, *Pseudo-Reinerius*, pp. xli-xlvi; Unterkircher, "'Pseudo-Rainer" und "Passauer Anonymus"'.
⁸⁸'The "Pseudo-Reinerius" Treatise, the Final State of a Thirteenth Century Work on Heresy from the Diocese of Passau', p. 259.

⁸⁹*Der Passauer Anonymus*.
⁹⁰*Le liber de duobus principiis*, pp. 64-78.

⁹¹'Raynerius Sacconi, O. P., *Summa de Catharis*'.
⁹²*Quellen zur Geschichte der Waldenser*, pp. 20-43.

⁹³*Geschichte der Deutschen Mystik*, pp. 461-471.

⁹⁴For which see Patschovsky, *Der Passauer Anonymus*, pp. 3-12, and Nickson, *Pseudo-Reinerius*, pp. xxii-xxvii.

*causae, Sectae haereticorum ab olim fuerunt multae, Secta autem pauperum de Lugduno, orta est hoc modo, Errores istorum distinguuntur in tres partes, Explanatio dictorum errorum and De moribus Valdensium.*⁹⁵ Döllinger printed a section about the Manicheans in addition to the *Rescriptum* and the *Compilatio de novo spiritu*.⁹⁶ Nickson includes as an appendix some sections of the treatise which have not been printed elsewhere: *De Machometo et de Sarracenorum lege, De concordia fidei, De ydolis and De divinacionibus*.⁹⁷ Most useful are the extracts printed by Patschovsky and Selge: a short section describing the origins of the Waldensians,⁹⁸ *De causis heresum, Quod secta Pauperum de Lugduno perniciosior sit quam cetere secte, Quomodo heretici cognoscantur*, a section on the recruiting tactics of the Waldensians and a section by the Anonymous of Passau about the Waldensians.⁹⁹ The Pseudo-Reinerius treatise (the shorter recension of the Anonymous of Passau compilation) has been edited by Nickson as a Ph.D. thesis;¹⁰⁰ a more polished version of the work, which however contains only part of the text, has been published.¹⁰¹ All the sections of the Anonymous of Passau compilation which are cited in this thesis are taken from the extracts printed in the Patschovsky & Selge collection. Although the sections contained in the compilation were written by different authors, for convenience I have referred to 'the Anonymous' when discussing these texts. Where individual sections have no Latin title I have cited the German title assigned to them in the Patschovsky & Selge edition.

⁹⁵*Catalogus Testium Veritatis*, pp. 431-44.

⁹⁶*Rescriptum, Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte*, pp. 42-52; *Compilatio, Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte*, pp. 395-402; *De secta Manicheorum, Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte*, pp. 293-96.

⁹⁷*Pseudo-Reinerius*, app. B, pp. 180-96.

⁹⁸*Quellen zur Geschichte der Waldenser*, p. 19.

⁹⁹*Quellen zur Geschichte der Waldenser*, pp. 70-103.

¹⁰⁰*Pseudo-Reinerius*.

¹⁰¹Nickson, 'The "Pseudo-Reinerius" Treatise, the Final State of a Thirteenth Century Work on Heresy from the Diocese of Passau'.

All biblical references are taken from the *New Revised Standard Version*.

SECTION I

**THE CONCEPT OF HERESY FROM THE TWELFTH TO THE
FOURTEENTH CENTURIES**

Chapter One

DEFINITIONS OF HERESY

Heresy is an opinion chosen by human faculties, contrary to holy Scripture, openly taught, and pertinaciously defended.¹

So pronounced Bishop Grosseteste in the early thirteenth century, in what is perhaps the most quoted medieval definition of heresy. What is less well-known, perhaps, is that this was only one amongst many such definitions, some similar to Grosseteste's, some quite different. Some of the definitions of heresy considered in this chapter were put forward by high churchmen, by canon lawyers, by academics. Others were the working definitions of the parish priests and monks who needed to be able to tell their colleagues in practical terms how to identify the heretics with whom they were coming into contact. The aim of this chapter is to examine the formal definitions of heresy and to show how these expanded the boundaries of the traditional Patristic concept of heresy by moving away from the emphasis on doctrinal error and the exercise of personal choice, and towards contumacy, novelty and disobedience to the Roman Church as the defining characteristics of heresy. Most of these definitions are drawn from the polemical literature; however, in order to provide some context, reference has been made to canonical (Gratian), decretal (*Vergentis in senium*), scholastic (Aquinas) and conciliar (John of Brevicoxa) sources.

We shall begin this discussion of the formal definitions of heresy with Gratian's treatment of the subject.² Although it would not be difficult to

¹Cited in Peters, *Heresy and Authority*, p. 4.

²The best introduction to the history of canon law during this period is Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law* (see ch. 3 for discussion of Gratian and the classical schools of law); useful

exaggerate Gratian's importance, there are discernible traces of his influence on heretic and polemicist alike. Many of the references in Waldensian *sententiae* contained in the Anonymous of Passau's collection can be traced back to Gratian's discussion of the ministry of unworthy priests,³ whilst Alan of Lille accused the Waldensians of taking material from C. 23 to uphold their opposition to killing, a charge which is perhaps supported (admittedly some time after Alan was writing) by the *Rescriptum heresiarcharum Lombardie ad Leonistas in Alemania*, which contains quotations from the *Decretum*.⁴ Bernard of Fontcaude quotes from D. 23 of the *Decretum* against Waldensians who allowed women to preach.⁵ Bishop Alvarus Pelagius appropriated Gratian's catalogue of heresies which formed the basis of the second part of his *Collyrium fidei*. John of Brevicoxa quoted Gratian's own definition of heresy in his treatise about the nature of Catholic truth.⁶ The task of 'deconstructing' Gratian's own argument - if indeed a work intended to reconcile contradictory authorities can be said to have an argument - is a difficult one; and it is all too easy to select opinions which Gratian only cites in order to demolish as representative of his own thought. Nevertheless, in view of his influence on polemical works, the task must be attempted; and so it is to Gratian's own discussion of the nature of heresy that we shall turn first.

dictionary articles on canon law are contained in *NCE & TRE*. For an introduction to Gratian's *Decretum* see Kuttner, 'Harmony from Dissonance'; brief analysis of the structure and contents of the *Decretum* in Brundage, app. 1, pp. 190-94; Landau, 'Gratian', p. 125.

³Patschovsky, 'The Literacy of Waldensianism', p. 121.

⁴A letter written to the Poor Lombards in Germany, contained in the Anonymous of Passau collection. Patschovsky, 'The Literacy of Waldensianism', p. 123. See Patschovsky & Selge, pp. 20-43 for the text of the *Rescriptum*.

⁵*Adversus Waldensium sectam*, VIII: iii (PL 204, 826).

⁶*De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 837).

It is at the end of C. 24 in the second part of the *Decretum* that Gratian digresses from considering the question of the validity of the powers of heretical priests into a theoretical discussion about the nature of heresy and its relationship to schism. It will become apparent that the view of heresy as a matter of individual choice is fundamental to Gratian's line of argument. In the first place, he makes clear the distinctive nature of heresy, as opposed to schism. According to a quotation from Jerome, the difference between heresy and schism is:

...that although heresy holds false teaching, schism after episcopal separation equally separates from the church. Although certainly in the beginning it can be understood as in some respects different; nevertheless there is no schism that does not devise some heresy for itself, so that it is rightly seen to have left the church.⁷

The characteristic of schism is separation from the institutional Church, rather than false doctrine, as in the case of heresy, although Jerome does note that most schisms, even if doctrinally orthodox initially, usually end in heresy. In this we can see a basis for the merging of the concepts of schism and heresy which took place in the later medieval period. A further quotation from Jerome, commenting on the Epistle to the Galatians, gives what was to become one of the standard medieval definitions of heresy:

Heresy is so-called from the Greek for choice, namely that each individual person chooses for himself that teaching which he thinks to be the better. Therefore, whoever understands scripture other than is required by the sense of the Holy Spirit, by whom it was written, even if he does not leave the church, can nevertheless be called a heretic..⁸

⁷'Inter heresim et scisma hoc esse arbitror, quod heresis perversum dogma habeat, scisma post episcopalem discessionem ab ecclesia pariter separat. Quod quidem in principio aliqua ex parte intelligi potest diversum; ceterum nullum scisma nisi heresim aliquam sibi confingit, ut recte ab ecclesia videatur recessisse'. C. 24 q. 3 c. 26 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 997).

⁸'Heresis grece ab electione dicitur, quod scilicet eam sibi unusquisque eligat disciplinam, quam putat esse meliorem. Quicumque igitur aliter scripturam intelligit, quam sensus Spiritus sancti flagitat, a quo scripta est, licet ab ecclesia non recesserit, tamen hereticus appellari potest...' C. 24 q. 3 c. 27 (Friedberg, vol. I, cols 997-98).

Stated here is the traditional concept of heresy, the essence of which is the unauthorised exercise of personal choice in the sphere of doctrine. A teaching is false when it is adopted on the basis of an interpretation of Scripture which is contrary to the 'sense of the Holy Spirit'. Interestingly, there is no direct mention of the institutional Church's role in mediating the correct interpretation of Scripture, although by making personal choice the basis of heresy, Jerome is implying that there must at least be some other authority (whether this is the Church or not) by which doctrines are to be judged. In view of the following clauses, however, the possibility of a more direct role for the Church is doubtful. The crucial clause here is 'even if he does not leave the church' (*licet ab ecclesia non recesserit*). Is Jerome implying that the orthodoxy or otherwise of a particular teaching is not determined by reference to the Church? If so, a doctrine has only to be contrary to the interpretation of the Holy Spirit to be false, and does not need to be declared so by the Church (although it is presumably the Church which declares a doctrine to be contrary to the interpretation of the Holy Spirit). The logical extension of this is that a doctrine which the Church has declared to be false need not necessarily be so; whether Jerome himself would have followed this interpretation is certainly questionable, although later the importance of the initial doctrinal certainly receded. However, the implication of the *licet ab ecclesia non recesserit* is quite clear. Heretics are constituted by choosing to exercise their own judgement in opposition to Scripture, not by their relationship to the institutional Church.

Gratian himself makes no comment on Jerome's definition of a heretic, but moves on to cite Augustine on the same subject:

A heretic is he who, for the sake of some temporal advantage and most of all for the sake of his own glory and pre-eminence, either creates or follows false and new opinions.⁹

Unlike Jerome, this citation from Augustine makes no reference to the interpretation of Scripture, but it nevertheless confirms that the essence of heresy is the use of personal choice in doctrinal matters. As with Jerome, the adoption of this line of argument would seem to imply that some other standard for judging teaching exists, but again there is no explicit statement as to who or what this standard might be. Although omitting certain aspects which Jerome touches upon, it is in some ways a more all-encompassing definition. First, it emphasises the primary place of pride, the *superbia* which medieval writers agreed was the foundation of all heresy. Second, there is no distinction made between the creators of heresy (heresiarchs), and their followers (*sequentes*), the definition including both equally. Third, it covers both ancient errors, which presumably have already been condemned,¹⁰ and new errors, which may or may not have been condemned. Thus the element of novelty, which in the Middle Ages became one of the most heinous of all crimes, is introduced.¹¹

The role of personal choice as the foundation of heresy is underlined by a further quotation from Augustine, which states that people who are led into error by others, rather than by their own audacity, are not heretics. The Apostle, he writes, says 'Avoid the heretical man after the first and second correction, because he is in himself damned, because in this way he has been subverted and sinned'. However, the quotation goes on:

⁹'Hereticus est, qui alicuius temporalis commodi et maxime gloriae principatusque sui gratia falsas ac novas opiniones vel gignit, vel sequitur.' C. 24, q. 3 c. 28 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 998).

¹⁰Cf. Gratian's own definition of heresy, C. 24 q. 1 d. a. c. 1 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 966).

¹¹Against the view that novelty was universally condemned in the Middle Ages, particularly by polemicists, see Smalley, 'Ecclesiastical Attitudes to Novelty', esp. pp. 117-19.

...those who do not defend their opinion, although false and wrong, by bold pertinacity, especially an opinion which they have not created by the audacity of their own presumption but received from parents who had been seduced and fallen into error, but seek the truth with careful solicitude, ready to be corrected when they find it, are by no means to be counted amongst the heretics.¹²

This quotation introduces a significant new element into the discussion: that of contumacy. Persistence in defending an error, even when it had been pointed out, eventually came to be regarded as almost more culpable than the original doctrinal error itself. After all, it was always possible to make a theological error, especially over some area of doctrine upon which the Church had not yet pronounced, particularly in the cases of so-called 'intellectual' heresy. It was also possible, as in the quotation above, to fall into heresy accidentally, either through the influence of family and friends, or through ignorance.¹³ In either case, the original error was forgivable; what was not permissible was stubbornly to maintain that position after having been corrected, according to St. Paul's injunction. Stubborn resistance to the Church's correction is always wrong, even when the sentence is unjust, as Chodorow points out,¹⁴ because contumacy necessarily implies the public avowal of the validity of one's own choice. The significance of contumacy is made even more explicit in a quotation from Augustine's *Contra Manichaeos*:

If those in the church of Christ who espouse anything unhealthy or depraved, when they have been corrected, so that they know what is healthy and right, contumaciously resist and

¹²'*Hereticum hominem post primam et secundam correctionem devota, quia subversus est huiusmodi, et peccat, in semetipso dampnatus. Sed qui sententiam suam, quamvis falsam atque perversam, nulla pertinaci animositate defendunt, presertim quam non audacia suae presumptionis pepererunt, sed a seductis atque in errorem lapsis parentibus acceperunt, querunt autem cauta sollicitudine veritatem, corrigi parati, cum invenerint, nequaquam sunt inter hereticos deputandi*'. C. 24 q. 3 c. 29 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 998).

¹³Elsewhere Gratian discusses the question of whether conscious avarice or unconscious heresy is more serious. C. 6 q. 1 c. 21 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 559).

¹⁴Chodorow, *Christian Political Theory*, p. 120. Chodorow argues that Gratian believed that sentences which were unjust, for whatever reason, should be obeyed, in order to preserve the stability and welfare of the ecclesiastical community. See pp. 114-24.

refuse to correct their pestilential and deadly dogmas, but persist in defending [them], they are heretics.¹⁵

A quotation from Pope Urban makes the similar point that those who defend their mistakes err more damnably than those who admit their error.¹⁶

There is a sense in which the two elements of false doctrine and contumacy exist in a somewhat uneasy tension. Which of these really constitutes the essence of heresy? If false doctrine, then there are no mitigating circumstances: the fact of having made a theological error is itself heresy. If contumacy, on the other hand, then the attitude of the heretic is all-important. Perhaps it is more the case that doctrinal error creates heresy, while contumacy in the face of correction creates a heretic? Is it then possible to believe a heresy and yet not to be a heretic? Later a gradual separation in the two concepts is apparent; at this point the question is unresolved. In the first place, it is clear that doctrinal error does constitute a heresy. At the beginning of q. 1, Gratian remarks that '...every heretic either follows a heresy already condemned or creates a new one',¹⁷ an echo of Augustine's definition. This definition makes it clear that a false belief does not necessarily have to fall under ecclesiastical condemnation in order for it to be a heresy. The next question which arises is whether a person who believes a heresy is *ipso facto* a heretic. It would appear that the answer to this is that someone who harbours false teaching, either secretly or openly, whether it has been condemned or not, is guilty of believing a heresy; they have not yet, however, taken the steps which turn them into a heretic. Elsewhere in C. 24,

¹⁵'Qui in ecclesia Christi morbidum aliquid pravumque sapiunt, si correcti, ut sanum rectumque sapiant, resistunt contumaciter, suaque pestifera et mortifera dogmata emendare nolunt, sed defensare persistunt, heretici sunt'. C. 24 q. 3 c. 31 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 998).

¹⁶C. 24 q. 3 c. 32 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 999).

¹⁷'Omnis enim hereticus aut iam dampnatam heresim sequitur, aut novam confingit'. C. 24 q. 1 d. a. c. 1 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 966).

Gratian hints at other elements which are important in this connection: the public proclamation of a heresy, for instance. In q. 1 he remarks that anyone who 'creates a heresy in his heart, and from that begins to preach such', does not have the power of binding and loosing.¹⁸ A little further on he says in a similar vein that 'anyone who has begun to teach anything against the faith is able neither to cast down nor to damn anyone'.¹⁹ Whether Gratian means to imply that a person becomes a heretic by publicly teaching a heresy is not entirely clear. Would a person who harboured false doctrines in their heart, but kept the fact secret, be a heretic? Against this view it should be noted that these *dicta* refer to clergy, who from the very nature of their office should be more careful of what they teach or say in public. It seems fair to say, nevertheless, that the public proclamation of a heresy smacks of an evangelizing zeal which would suggest a fair degree of confidence, if not obstinate persistence, in one's views. The role of contumacy in creating a heretic is much clearer, as has already been pointed out.

In Gratian's thought the balance appears to be in favour of doctrinal error, although later in our period the pendulum was to swing towards contumacy as the single most important defining characteristic of heresy. For him, therefore, it is the elements of individual choice and judgement which above all distinguish heresy. Personal judgement is wrong because it leads to a person choosing for themselves which doctrines to believe, and so almost inevitably to erroneous doctrine. It also leads to a person stubbornly maintaining that choice in the face of correction from the Church, in other

¹⁸'Si autem ex corde suo novam heresim confinxit, ex quo talia predicare cepit, neminem dampnare potuit, quia non potest deicere quemquam iam prostratus'. C. 24 q. 1 d. p. c. 4 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 967).

¹⁹'...ex quo aliquis contra fidem ceperit aliqua docere, nec deicere aliquem valet nec dampnare'. C. 24 q. 1 d. p. c. 37 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 981).

words, to contumacy. The exercise of this individual choice inevitably entails a rejection of more ancient and authoritative standards. People who indulge themselves in this way 'have recourse not to prophetic voices, not to apostolic letters, nor to evangelical authorities, but to their own selves, and for this reason they are teachers of error, because they were not disciples of the truth'.²⁰ To sum up, the seeds of later developments which were to push the concept of heresy beyond its original boundaries are apparent in Gratian's thought: first, the basis for the merging of the concepts of schism and heresy, second, the beginning of the decreasing importance of the doctrinal error and increasing importance of the attitude towards the Church, and third, the gradual separation of 'heresy' and 'the heretic'.

Honorius Augustodunensis' work appeared at around the same time as the *Decretum*, or possibly a little earlier in the century. His own definition of heresy comes after an enumeration of the luminaries of the Catholic Church, and at the head of his copy of the traditional Patristic catalogue of heretics:

Since we have generally noted those who have lit up the Church with the light of Catholic teaching, it remains to us to briefly note those who have darkened her, so to speak, with the foul smoke of heretical beliefs. So, heresy is so-called from choice. Hence a heretic is so-called from one who chooses, because each one chooses which sect to follow. But he becomes a heretic through error and contentiousness, because he defends his error contentiously, and despises the words and writings of the wise. He contradicts the Church and is certainly alienated from her faith. But he who understands Scripture other than it is, ought not to be judged a heretic, provided that he corrects himself when he has heard a teacher.²¹

²⁰Pope Leo: '...non ad propheticas voces, non ad apostolicas litteras, nec ad evangelicas auctoritates, sed ad semetipsos recurrunt, et ideo magistri erroris existunt, quia veritatis discipuli non fuerunt'. C. 24 q. 3 c. 30 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 998).

²¹'Cum eos summam notavimus, qui claro lumine Catholicae doctrinae Ecclesiam illustraverunt, restat ut etiam illos strictum [sic] notemus, qui eam quasi tetro fumo haeretici dogmatis obfuscaverunt. Haeresis igitur dicitur electio. Inde haereticus dicitur elector, quia quisque hanc sectam quam sequitur eligit. Fit autem haereticus errore et contentione, dum quis errorem suum contentiose defendit, et sapientum [sic] dicta vel scripta contemnit. Is quippe Ecclesiae contradicit, et ab ejus fide alienus existit. Non est autem haereticus

This links up with a number of elements in Gratian's discussion. The place of personal choice and contumacy are clearly specified. Once again comes the suggestion that there is a distinction to be made between heresy and a heretic; only here the point is more explicit. The heresy itself is constituted by the exercise of personal choice, but a heretic is created by the persistent defence of the error. Honorius answers the question raised earlier: it seems that it is possible to espouse a heresy, and yet not to be a heretic. This is a significant distinction because it draws attention away from the theological error - theoretically something which anyone could fall into and which could be recanted - and focuses it instead on the individual heretic. From there it was only a short step to asking the question which began to consume the polemicists: what kind of a person is the heretic? The answer was that above all the heretic has an obstinate, argumentative personality. As has been seen earlier, the creation of a heretic depends not on the fact of believing a heresy, but on a person's reaction to that heresy being pointed out by the proper authority (the proper authority here is 'spoken and written wisdom', in other words the Scriptures as interpreted by the institutional Church). A misguided, but fundamentally right-hearted and orthodox person will recant the error, a heretic will obstinately defend their false belief.

Inevitably, then, the scope of the concept which we saw in Gratian's discussion began to widen. The beginnings of this process can be detected in Bernard of Fontcaude's treatise *Adversus Waldensium sectam* (1191). There are two strands to Bernard's definition of heresy. The first is similar to Gratian: 'a heretic is he who either follows another's or an old heresy, or introduces a new one'. This raises nothing new, although it is interesting to note that the

judicandus qui Scripturam aliter quam est intelligit, si modo sese correxerit, cum a doctore audierit'. *Liber de haeresibus*, Praefatio (PL 172, 233-234).

previous condemnation of a heresy is not referred to here. Again the crime of novelty is included, but the issue is not developed any further. It is the second strand which is innovative, because it focuses the definition not on a doctrinal issue, but on the authority of the medieval Church itself. The example of a new heresy which Bernard gives is of 'those who say that neither the bishops, nor the priests, nor, which is horrible to say! the holy Roman Church, ought to be obeyed'.²² This is the first definition which defines a heretic as someone who is disobedient, not just to the Universal Church, but to the Roman Church itself. The implication is not so much that a person can become a heretic without believing a heresy, but rather that the scope of the definition of a heresy has been widened to include disobedience to the Roman Church (not just to the Universal Church), as well as a purely doctrinal heresy, such as Arianism.

Bernard's statement is indicative of just how fluid the concept of heresy was at the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries. This new-found flexibility, not to say pragmatism, in defining heresy is evident elsewhere during this period; most of all in Innocent III's decretal, *Vergentis in senium* (1199). This established a precedent not only for the Church hierarchy, but also for secular rulers. The decretal marked a significant departure from earlier definitions of heresy by emphasising the rejection of lawful ecclesiastical authority, rather than erroneous doctrine, as the primary hallmark of heresy. It achieved this by elevating the importance of contumacy as the defining characteristic of heresy and equating heresy for the first time with treason, applying the penalties which Roman Law had

²²'Haereticus vero est, qui antiquam, seu alterius haeresim sequitur, vel novam fingit. Tales sunt qui dicunt, non esse obediendum episcopis, sacerdotibus, nec, quod dictu horribile est! sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae'. *Adversus Waldensium sectam*, VI: i (PL 204, 812).

prescribed for treason against the Emperor to heretics. Whilst *Vergentis* does not give an explicit definition of heresy, it echoes some of the earlier distinctions. Certainly the crime of contumacy is prominent, the decretal underlining the point that anyone who, having had their error pointed out to them by a member of the Church hierarchy, still persists in their own opinions, has only himself to blame for the consequences. But the element of personal choice which had been the basis of earlier definitions is modified slightly, in that varying degrees of culpability are applied to the adherents of heresy. The decretal is aware that many people did not choose the heretical opinion of their own accord, but had fallen almost by accident into error, and so do not strictly fall within the standard definitions. These groups *Vergentis* is inclined to treat comparatively leniently. Much more culpable are those people who should know better, who cannot plead ignorance as their excuse, and who in fact have chosen their heretical opinions for themselves. These people should receive the full force of the penalties, 'so that [to him] in whom the fault is greater, let a more serious punishment be administered'.²³ It was the insidious and secretive spread of heresy that Innocent was most concerned to check, and so the provisions of *Vergentis* applied not only to heretics themselves, but also 'against the defenders, shelterers, favourers and believers of heretics'.²⁴ These categories were theoretically distinct; heretics proper being those who had made a formal profession of their beliefs by joining a sect and fulfilling its requirements - the *perfecti* of the Cathars, for instance. Those who merely held the beliefs of a certain group, without formally entering it, were known as the *credentes*; whilst *receptatores* and

²³'ut in quo major est culpa, gravior exerceatur vindicta'. *Vergentis* (PL 214, 539).

²⁴'contra defensores, receptatores, fautores et credentes haereticorum'. *Vergentis* (PL 214, 539).

fautores were those who aided heretics in any way.²⁵ Such distinctions were retained in theory by some polemicists, although in practice they were of little significance.²⁶ All those who were connected with heresy were equally tainted and suspect; all were traitors to their Church.

The shift towards defining heresy on the basis of attitude towards the institutional Church continues in the sermons against heresy preached by Berthold of Regensburg, sometime between the 1240's and 1260's. He writes that:

there are certain people who deny that [the Church of God] exists, or contradict the faith, when they hear something about the faith. These are heretics and they are eternally damned.²⁷

Here heresy is still a matter of faith, but it can also be a matter of denying the Church - although it should be noted that here the Church of God is not specified as the Roman Church. After the mid-thirteenth century, discussions about the nature of heresy become more complex. A consolidation of the earlier position was achieved by Aquinas, whose definition of heresy was in fact a more developed form of the traditional concept of heresy. After examining various propositions, he concludes that there are two ways in which a person can deviate from the Christian faith. The first is the way in which the Jews and pagans deviate, as they have never had any intention of assenting to Christ. The second way in which a person can deviate is that of the heretic occurs because:

though he intends to assent to Christ, he fails in his choice of the things involved in that assent, because he chooses, not what Christ really bequeathed, but what his own mind suggests.

²⁵Shannon, *The Popes and Heresy*, pp. 5-6.

²⁶E. g. Raymond of Penafort, *Directory* (Selge, pp. 51-52). This treatise, excepting the prologue, is taken from the anonymous *Doctrina de modo procedendi contra haereticos* edited by Martène & Durand.

²⁷'Quidam negant ita esse, vel contradicunt fidei, cum de fide aliquid audiunt. Hii sunt heretici et hii eternaliter dampnantur'. Sermon 23 (Schönbach, p. 17).

Therefore heresy is a species of infidelity, attaching to those who profess faith in Christ yet corrupt his dogmas.²⁸

Heresy is a form of unbelief, but it is distinct from the unbelief of Jews or pagans. He notes that some heretics may well believe that they are assenting to Christ, but have chosen to assent to the wrong beliefs. This is because the cause of heresy is pride and covetousness, which leads the heretic to choose not true apostolic teaching, but what he himself wants to believe. The element of personal choice which was part of earlier discussions about heresy is again highlighted. There is no reference to the Church in this specific instance, but Aquinas would surely argue that the Roman Church is the only repository of 'what Christ really bequeathed'.

There is little which is innovative in Aquinas' discussion, but Pseudo-David of Augsburg's treatment of the question at around the same time as Aquinas was writing makes it clear that debate about the nature of heresy was continuing to move forward. In keeping with traditional concepts, he writes:

Of course those people who have received the faith through the sacrament of baptism and through the perversity of their opinions thrown it away are called heretics. For those who have never received baptism or the catholic faith are called gentiles or Jews.²⁹

The insistence on the role of baptism is significant: to be a traitor one has first formally to be a member of the community. Those who have never formally entered the Christian Church through baptism cannot technically, therefore, be considered heretics. This represents a major shift away from the earlier

²⁸Alio modo, per hoc quod intendit quidem Christo assentire, sed deficit in eligendo ea quibus Christo assentiat, quia non eligit ea quae sunt vere a Christo tradita, sed ea quae sibi propria mens suggerit. Et ideo haeresis est infidelitatis species pertinens ad eos qui fidem Christi profitentur, sed ejus dogmata corrumpunt'. *Summa theologiae*, 2a2æ. 11, 1 (transl. Gilbey, vol. 32, p. 82).

²⁹'Heretici quippe dicuntur, qui fidem per sacramentum baptismi susceperunt et perverse senciendo abiiciunt. Nam qui nec baptismum nec fidem catholicam aliquando susceperunt, aut gentiles dicuntur aut Iudei'. *De inquisitione hereticorum*, 2 (Preger, p. 204).

idea of heresy as a matter of doctrinal error, which had in effect made heresy a species of infidelity which was analagous to, although more serious than, the infidelity of the Jews and pagans, substituting instead the idea of heresy as being essentially concerned with membership of the community of the faithful. The removal of doctrinal error from the equation actually excludes Jews and pagans from the category of heretic, although Pseudo-David does add that there is a sense in which Jews can be considered heretics, in that they promulgate an interpretation of Scripture which, when measured against Christian standards, is distorted.³⁰ Here we can see the boundaries of the concept of heresy again being pushed forward: if someone acts to the detriment of the faith then there is a sense in which he can be considered a heretic. Much more remarkable is a passage which occurs further on in Pseudo-David's treatise. Someone is to be reckoned a heretic if they teach a heresy or openly defend it, if they believe that 'the heretics teach the truth and the truth is what they teach, and that they are good, when nevertheless they know that they are of such a kind'.³¹ Also falling into the category of heretic are those:

who study with them in secret, who are of their sect, who take part in their gatherings in secret corners, who confess them in secret, who despise sound rites and faith and do not wish to guard them, who doubt whether the catholic faith is true.³²

This includes not only the heretics proper, but also the *credentes*, *fautores* and *receptatores* - in short, anyone who acts at all suspiciously can be judged a heretic.

³⁰*De inquisitione hereticorum*, 2 (Preger, p. 204).

³¹'Hereticus iudicatur, qui docet heresim vel qui aperte defendit, qui credit hereticos vera docere et vera esse que docent, et eos bonos esse, cum tamen sciant quales sunt'. *De inquisitione hereticorum*, 39 (Preger, p. 225).

³²'Qui discit ab eis occulte, que sunt de secta eorum, qui interest conventiculis eorum in angulis, qui confitetur eis occulte, qui ritus et fidem sanam despicit et non vult servare, qui dubitat an vera sit fides catholica'. *De inquisitione hereticorum*, 39 (Preger, pp. 225-26).

A slightly later definition of heresy, contained in the Pseudo-Reinerius treatise, retains the traditional notion of heresy, but at the same time continues to expand the boundaries of those notions. The definition of heresy is as follows:

It should be noted that a heretic is that person who creates a false teaching such as Arrius. Also he who imitates a heresiarch such as the Arrians. Also whoever understands scripture in a way other than is demanded by the Holy Spirit, even if he does not leave the Church. Also he who is separated from the communion of the Church and the sacraments. Also one who perverts the sacraments such as a simoniac.³³

The first three statements are unremarkable, closely following previous ideas. Both heresiarchs and heretics are specifically named, presumably in order to ensure that both the *credentes* and *simplices* fall within the scope of the definition. The use of Arius and the Arians as examples is not unusual; as we shall see the medieval mind inevitably harked back to earlier sects in order to explain the origins and nature of contemporary sects. The statement about the misinterpretation of Scripture is a repetition of part of Jerome's definition of heresy, whilst the third statement continues the line of thought begun by Bernard and Berthold. However, it is not clear what is meant by defining a heretic as someone who is 'separated from the communion of the Church and the sacraments'. Does this definition apply to a Catholic who has (perhaps through indifference as much as anything else) ceased to attend Church regularly, participate in the Eucharist, or make confession? If so, it constitutes a remarkably broad definition of heresy. Or does it refer to people who are doctrinally orthodox, but who have positively rejected the authority of the Church? There are echoes here of earlier definitions of schism - indeed,

³³'Nota quod ille est hereticus qui falsam opinionem gignit ut Arrius. Item qui imitatur heresiarcham (sic) ut Arriani. Item quicumque aliter scripturam intelligit quam spiritus sanctus flagitet licet ab ecclesia non recesserit. Item ab ecclesie communione divisus et sacramentis. Item sacramentorum perversor ut symoniacus'. Pseudo-Reinerius, II (Nickson, p. 14).

the whole trend towards making obedience to the institutional Church the defining characteristic of heresy may be seen in one sense as a process of gradual merging of the concepts of heresy and schism.

It is with the final statement that Pseudo-Reinerius really breaks new ground. This is the only instance in the polemical literature where simony is specifically referred to as heresy, and it is for this reason a significant statement.³⁴ In general, the polemicists did not discuss the question of simony; Eckbert of Schönau is an exception, but he never states that simony is a heresy, or even uses the phrase *simoniaca haeresis*. Most medieval canonists and theologians (with the exception of Cardinal Humbert)³⁵ would have admitted when forced to do so that simony was not strictly a heresy, although in their language and imagery there is a strong presumption that it is precisely that. The designation *simoniaca haeresis* occurs from at least the time of Gregory I, and found its way from the conciliar decrees into the canonical collections (Burchard of Worms' *Decretum*, for instance), and its use becomes most apparent during the Gregorian Reform. The interpretation of this phrase is open to debate. Leclercq has argued that after the Gregorian Reform the phrase *simoniaca haeresis* was used very precisely.³⁶ It was not a vague metaphor, the equivalent of *pestis*, *morbus* or *pravitas*; rather it expressed the concrete reality of a serious sin. 'Not only is simony a heresy in the same way as all of those who endanger the faith and who are proscribed by the Church, but it is also the greatest of heresies: it was the first of all of them and "was directed against the rule of the nascent Church"; and it is the

³⁴John of Brevicoxa states that simony is a heresy. *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 838).

³⁵Humbert took an extreme rigorist, almost Cyprianic, stand in the eleventh-century debate about simoniacal orders. His position was never widely accepted, and the majority view, typically represented by his opponent Peter Damian, was that simoniacal orders were valid.

³⁶Leclercq, 'Simoniaca heresis', pp. 523-30.

most serious'.³⁷ Against this statement stands the evidence from Eckbert of Schönau, who argues that although the act of Simon Magus was the first act of simony, his transaction was qualitatively different from later simoniacs, who were not only less proud and vile than the Magus, but differed in intention from him. While they were merely mistaken in thinking that an ecclesiastical office was a secular commodity, Simon Magus was fully aware that the power of the Holy Spirit was a spiritual gift, but nevertheless attempted to buy it.³⁸

In spite of this, Leclercq is in no doubt that simony was regarded as a heresy during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Gilchrist, on the other hand, from his examination of the technical vocabulary of the anti-simoniactal polemicists during this period, argues that *simonia* itself had no exact theological or canonical meaning.³⁹ Although he confirms that the phrase *simoniaca haeresis* was in frequent usage, this usage was vague and imprecise. His conclusion is that in the eleventh century simony was commonly distinguished from formal heresy, or heresy *simpliciter*. Rather it was a heresy *secundum quid*, in one very particular aspect only. This distinction is also adopted by de Vooght, although he is dealing with the scholastic period.⁴⁰ The practice of using language which suggested that simony was a heresy, whilst at the same time denying such an identification in theory, led to some confusion amongst the canonists and theologians who wrote against simony. Gratian himself did not make a direct equation between simony and heresy, although the following *dictum* implies that he did hold to it:

³⁷Non seulement la simonie est une hérésie au même titre que toutes celles qui ont mis la foi en péril et l'Église a proscrites, mais elle est même la plus grande des hérésies: elle fut la première de toutes et "s'éleva contre la règle de l'Église naissante", et elle est la plus grave'. Leclercq, 'Simoniaca heresis', pp. 526-27.

³⁸*Sermones*, XI (Harrison, vol. I, pp. 290-91).

³⁹Gilchrist, 'Simoniaca haeresis and the Problem of Orders', pp. 209-35.

⁴⁰de Vooght, 'La simoniaca haeresis selon les auteurs scolastiques', pp. 65-80.

It is clear from the authority of Ambrose and Gregory that simoniacs (just like other heretics) have deviated from the faith, and for this reason what is determined about the others is accordingly understood about them.⁴¹

This clearly elevates the gravity of the crime of simony, which becomes more than an act which corrupts the temporal structures of the institutional Church; it is an act which strikes at the faith itself. The conclusion that simony is a heresy is implicit in the phrase 'just like *other* heretics', but no positive statement to this effect is made. Pseudo-Reinerius' precise statement stands out all the more starkly against the background of linguistic and conceptual confusion which surrounded the debate about simony.

Precisely why simony should be considered a heresy remains a mystery about which even medieval commentators were puzzled. Pseudo-Reinerius appears to hold the standard view, which was that to deal in ecclesiastical offices was to trade in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Simony was not only a perversion of the sacraments, but constituted the unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit (Mk 3: 28-29; Lk 12: 10). This rather strained explanation makes more sense in the context of a concept of heresy which was in the process of being redefined on the basis of obedience to the Church. Just as the Roman Church attempted to regulate certain aspects of the practice of lay piety during this period, and regarded with suspicion those aspects which threatened to evade its control to the point of pronouncing them heretical, so also it consolidated its grip over all areas of priests' lives. The significance of the identification which was made in all but name between simony and heresy was that it allowed this Church to bring yet another area of life - this

⁴¹Ex hac auctoritate Ambrosii et Gregorii patet, quod symoniaci (sicut et alii heretici) a fide exorbitant, et ideo consequenter de illis intelligitur, quod de aliis decernitur'. C. 1 q. 1 d. p. c. 22 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 366)

time the business practices of its clergy rather than the religious practices of the laity - under its control. This was partly a matter of pragmatism, since by applying the category of heresy to what was essentially a troublesome and objectionable practice the Church was able to underline the gravity of the offence and justify more severe punishments; but it was also an inevitable part of the developing concept of heresy. If a heretic was so-defined on the basis of his attitude to the authority of the Roman Church, then any questioning of that Church's jurisdiction was heresy, whether involving doctrinal error in the earlier sense or not. In fact, such questioning itself became a type of doctrinal error.

By the early decades of the fourteenth century, the discussion about heresy was reaching its final stages. This is evident in, for instance, Bernard Gui's inquisitor's manual, *Practica inquisitionis* (c. 1323):

But it should be noted that, if anyone should argue openly and manifestly against the faith, adducing the arguments and the authorities upon which heretics usually rely, such a person may easily be convicted as a heretic by the learned faithful of the Church, for he is judged to be a heretic already by the fact that he attempts to defend the error.⁴²

In one sense, Bernard is still adhering to the doctrinal basis of heresy. A heretic is someone who argues 'against the faith' - but does 'the faith' refer to the deposit of apostolic teaching, or is it here being used interchangeably with 'the Church'? This is not clear, but in fact the answer makes little difference to the final result. Someone who defends their error, regardless of whether the error involved doctrine or disobedience, is a heretic by the very fact of their defence. Here we see the role of contumacy, present in earlier

⁴²Notandum autem quod, si aliquis contra fidem aperte et manifeste disputaret, rationes et auctoritates quibus consueverunt inniti heretici inducendo, talis faciliter per fideles Ecclesie litteratos convinceretur hereticus, cum eo ipso jam hereticus censeretur quo errorem defendere niteretur'. *Practica inquisitionis*, Instructio generalis (Mollat, vol. I, p. 5).

discussions, becoming the deciding factor. At the same time, the issue of whether the belief which the accused holds is consonant with Catholic teaching becomes of less importance. The gravity of the heresy itself has receded, it is the fact of being a heretic - a stubborn defender of personally chosen beliefs - which takes centre stage.

John of Brevicoxa's discussion of heresy in his *Tractatus de fide et ecclesia romano pontifice et concilio generali* (1375) embodies these changes, and represents the final point in discussion about the nature of heresy in this period. John was a theologian and colleague of d'Ailly and Gerson. His treatise, although part of the conciliar debate about the nature of the Universal Church, is 'free from the passionate promotion of the cause of conciliarism'.⁴³ For our purposes, the section on heresy is most significant for its rejection of the earlier definitions, confirming the expansion in the boundaries of the concept of heresy. After defining Catholic truth as 'the truth which any pilgrim, using reason, who has been sufficiently instructed in the Law of Christ, is bound to believe either explicitly or implicitly of necessity for salvation',⁴⁴ he asks 'What is heresy or heretical falsehood?' The answer to this is that 'heresy is false dogma, dogma contrary to the orthodox faith'. Whilst conceding that other definitions may exist, 'this one appears to be sufficient and good. No matter what other valid definition might be given, it would be consonant with this one; for that heresy is false dogma is asserted by Jerome, as *Decret.* 2. p. C. 24, *Questione* 3. *Inter haeresim* etc. has it'.⁴⁵ This is

⁴³Oberman, *Forerunners of the Reformation*, p. 62, brief biography pp. 60-63. The section of the *De fide et ecclesia* dealing with heresy is translated pp. 67-98.

⁴⁴'Catholica veritas, est veritas quam quilibet viator, utens ratione, cui Lex Christi fuit sufficienter dogmatisata, de necessitate salutis explicite, vel implicate, tenetur credere' *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 828).

⁴⁵'...quid est haeresis, seu falsitas haeretica: & ideo, respondendo ad istud dubium, dicitur quod haeresis est dogma falsum Fidei orthodoxae contrarium. Istam descriptionem plures dederunt, & ponunt: ideo aliam non volui dare, maxime quia apparet sufficiens & bona, & quaecumque alia daretur, quae valeret, conveniret cum ista; quod enim haeresis sit dogma

a restatement of the traditional definition of heresy, but it implies that there may be some alteration, or rather progression, providing the progression still encompasses the essence of the traditional definition. He rejects criticisms of the definition of heresy as false dogma, which contest that:

Many new heresies have arisen, but those have not begun to be false dogmas contrary to the orthodox Faith: therefore at some time there were dogmas false to the Catholic faith; but these were not heresies, and consequently the given definition is not good.⁴⁶

This is not a definition acceptable to the Roman Church, as John makes clear in later discussion about the condemnation of heresy. Presumably such beliefs as the necessity of a life of apostolic poverty which many heretics espoused would fall into this category; not condemned until comparatively late, it had nevertheless been regarded as highly suspect by the Church hierarchy for many years. It is however proved, argues John, that new heresies do in fact arise, as the *Decretum* shows:

*Pope Urban excommunicated Pelagius and Coelestius who introduced a new Law into the Church.*⁴⁷ And Gratian said in C. 24, quaestione I, *Every heretic either follows a heresy already damned or creates a new one.* Therefore new heresies are created, and consequently the first proposition above is true.⁴⁸

falsum, testatur Hieronymus, ut habetur, *Decret.* 2. p. C. 24, *Questione* 3. *Inter haeresim.* etc'. *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 833).

⁴⁶'Sed contra istam descriptionem arguitur sic: multae fiunt novae haereses, & tamen illae non incipiunt esse falsa dogmata contraria Fidei orthodoxae: ergo aliquando fuerunt falsa dogmata Fidei Catholicae; & tamen non fuerunt haereses, & per consequens descriptio data non est bona.' *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 833).

⁴⁷A citation from C. 24 q. 3 c. 37 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 1000), incorrectly attributed there to Pope Urban.

⁴⁸'Consequentia nota: & antecedens probatur; scilicet quod multae fiunt novae haereses: quia, ut habetur *Decret.* 2. p. Caus. 24 quaest. 3. Cap. *Notandum.* Urbanus Papa Pelagium & Coelestinum novam Legem in sanctam Ecclesiam introducentes excommunicavit. Et Gratianus, C. 24. quaestione I. ait, *Omnis haereticus, aut jam damnatam haeresim sequitur, aut novam confingit.* Ergo cum finguntur novae haereses, & per consequens, antecedens prius assumptum est verum.' *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 833).

More innovative is John's understanding of schism. In defining schism as 'heretically perverted dogma and contrary to the orthodox Faith',⁴⁹ he fundamentally alters the earlier view of the relationship between heresy and schism, and ignores the etymological sense of the word which had been carefully preserved up to this point. The sense of schism as separation from the institutional Church has been abandoned, and so the merging of the two concepts which was hinted at by Pseudo-Reinerius is made explicit here. Under this definition, schism becomes a type of heresy, rather than a related, but distinct, concept. Admittedly Jerome had said that most schisms usually end up inventing a heresy for themselves; nevertheless John's definition is confirmation of the increasing tendency during this period to confuse the concepts of heresy and schism, and to regard any questioning of the Church's authority *per se* as doctrinal error.

From constructing a definition which includes heresy and schism, John then turns to considering the nature of heresy in detail. Having noted that opinions about heresy vary as much as they do about Catholic truth, he describes two views, one of which posits three, and the other five, categories of heresy. The former he labels as 'Heresy *contra* Scripture', because its proponents maintain that only propositions which contradict Scripture are heretical. Within the 'Heresy *contra* Scripture' view, the first category of heresy comprises those assertions which not only conflict in some way with Scripture, but are direct contradictions of Scripture; for instance, the assertion that 'the Word did not become flesh'.⁵⁰ The second is those which to all intelligent and informed people are clearly incompatible with

⁴⁹'Item, schisma dicitur haereseos perversum dogma, & contrarium Fidei orthodoxae.' *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 833).

⁵⁰*De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 836).

Scripture', for instance, 'Christ was not born for our salvation'.⁵¹ The third and final category is those propositions which, although they conflict with Scripture, are only evidently so through 'subtle consideration' to 'those who are wise, steeped in Holy Scripture': for instance 'Christ is not anything, but that man about which I can be told in three different kinds of assertions'.⁵² In John's opinion the 'Heresy *contra* Scripture' view is not an adequate definition of heresy - a significant position to take because this type covers precisely those areas of theological error which were prominent in the early definitions but whose importance had gradually receded. John is careful, though, not to completely abandon the issue of the interpretation of Scripture - this is merely an inadequate, rather than incorrect, definition of heresy. In order to maintain the scriptural element, whilst at the same time bringing in the role of the Roman Church, John introduces a second type, which he designates as 'Heresy *contra* Scripture and Tradition'. This type divides into five categories. The first category is assertions which contradict things which are only taught by Scripture; whereas the second is those which contradict the teachings of the Apostles or of Scripture in any way.⁵³ These two categories are essentially those which comprise the 'Heresy *contra* Scripture' type, but which are here included as categories of a wider concept. The third category consists of assertions which 'in any way contradict what has been revealed to or inspired by the Church after the Apostles';⁵⁴ the

⁵¹*De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 836).

⁵²'Aliae sunt haereses quae non omnibus, sed solum sapientibus, eruditis in Scripturis divinis, per subtilem considerationem, sacris Litteris inveniuntur adversari: ut, *Christus non est aliquid*, sed quod homo istos tres modos possum praedici assertores'. *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 836). The Latin text is not clear at this point. Oberman, p. 81, translates the phrase '*Christus non est aliquid*... assertores' as 'As far as his humanity is concerned Christ is not something', referring to a *dictum* of Alexander III cited in the *Liber Extra*, 5. 7. 7: 'mirum est, qua temeritate quisquam audet dicere, quod Christus non sit aliquid secundum quod homo'.

⁵³*De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 836).

⁵⁴'Tertia species erroris, est eorum qui revelatis, vel inspiratis Ecclesiae, post Apostolos quomodolibet obviarent'. *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 836).

fourth those which contradict the chronicles or the records of events or apostolic histories.⁵⁵ Thus the role of the Roman Church in interpreting Scripture and defining heresy is confirmed. Most innovative of all is the fifth and last category, consisting of assertions which:

are shown to be incompatible with divine Scripture, or with Apostolic teaching contained outside their Scriptures, or with what has been inspired by or revealed to the Church, together with other truths which cannot rationally be denied: although the incompatibility with such truths need not be apparent from the form of the propositions.⁵⁶

An example of the latter would be the statement 'The faith Augustine held was not true'. Although this statement is not strictly heretical, it nevertheless is suggestive of heresy. In addition, 'from this kind of assertion, together with certain other half truths, manifest heresy clearly issues'. This last category puts a formidable weapon into the hands of the institutional Church. To argue that heresy is anything which is incompatible with Scripture and the apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions was nothing new, but to add to this that heresy is the rejection of truths which cannot rationally be denied is remarkable. Here we can see the way in which the Church could support its theory with practice. Who is to decide which truths are 'rational'? Clearly the Church is in the best position to undertake this task; reason is an integral part of the truth, but is not always easy to discern. Qualify this with the proviso that heretical statements need not be obviously incompatible with revealed truths and the Church is equipped to condemn as heresy anything which it regards with suspicion. By this standard only the Church is sufficiently erudite to be able to distinguish heretical statements. It is a

⁵⁵*De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 836).

⁵⁶'Quinta species, est eorum qui Scripturae divinae, vel doctrinae Apostolicae extra suas Scripturas habitae, vel inspiratis, aut revelatis Ecclesiae, cum aliis veris quae negari rationabiliter non possunt, impossibiles demonstrantur: licet ex forma propositionum talibus veritatibus nequaquam appareant impossibiles.' *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 836).

long way from Jerome's definition of a heretic as someone who 'understands scripture other than is required by the sense of the Holy Spirit' to convicting as a heretic anyone whose beliefs, statements or lifestyle smack of unorthodoxy. As we would expect, it is this second type of heresy (Heresy *contra* Scripture and Tradition) which John favours, paralleling as it does the five types of Catholic truth.⁵⁷ The type consolidates the shifts which we have seen previously by widening the scope of the definition to include any aspects of practice or belief which the Roman Church found alarming or wished to bring under its control.

Having supplied an all-encompassing definition of heresy, John returns to some of the points raised by Gratian's treatment of heresy by raising the question of explicit and implicit condemnation. Has every heresy been condemned? Here we see John wrestling with the problem of the new heretics not included in Patristic or early papal condemnations. Were they heretics even if their particular sect or beliefs had not yet been condemned? What was the position if by some accident their particular heresy was never formally condemned? Was it, in other words, the fact of ecclesiastical condemnation which created a heretic? Whilst churchmen would no doubt have wished to maintain the significance of ecclesiastical condemnation, one suspects that they would have been most unwilling to state unequivocally that no-one was actually a heretic until they had been condemned. In any case, this line of reasoning would not have conformed with the traditional definitions in which a heretic was someone who had either taken up an ancient heresy or created a new one. It was much more logical to argue that they were in reality heretics before any formal ecclesiastical condemnation.

⁵⁷*De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 836).

This would be the case even if they were not recognisably heretical, in keeping with the growing tendency to focus on the heretic as a particular kind of person.

While Gratian distinguished between new and condemned heresies, John is unequivocal in maintaining that every heresy is condemned.⁵⁸ In support of this position he cites the canon from the Fourth Lateran Council which excommunicated and anathematized every heresy which flouts the 'holy Catholic and orthodox faith': from this it follows that every heresy is condemned. This circular argument hints at a belief in the fact that every heresy has an innate life of its own, whether the Church has yet discovered its existence or not. He dismisses the objection that only heresies specifically listed by the Council were condemned by pointing out that since the previous canon approved a statement of the entire Catholic faith, everything which is contrary to that faith has also been condemned.⁵⁹ As further evidence John returns to Gratian: 'every heretic either follows a heresy already condemned or creates a new one'. Noting that the gloss on this *dictum* says that 'every heretic has been excommunicated, however misled he may be', he reconciles his position by arguing that Gratian distinguished between explicit and implicit condemnation. The old heresies are obviously those which have been explicitly condemned, while new heresies have only been implicitly condemned.⁶⁰ Four categories of heresy have been condemned. First, individual heresies which have been specifically condemned, such as the heresy of Arius; second, heresies which contain statements contrary to the exact words asserted and approved by all the

⁵⁸*De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 836).

⁵⁹*De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, cols 836-37).

⁶⁰*De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 837).

faithful of sound mind, for instance, 'God is not creator of all things visible and invisible'. Third, heresies which directly contradict any volume, book, or treatise that has come to be regarded as equal in authority to canonical writing; and fourth, assertions from which a heresy so obviously follows that it is clear even to laymen of sound mind.⁶¹ Implicitly condemned heresies are those which do not fall into these four categories, but:

are discovered only after detailed investigation by men steeped in Holy Scripture, who can determine to what extent canonical truth is contradicted or to what extent the content of Scripture or the doctrine of the universal Church is approved and what other heresies of any of the aforesaid kinds follow from them.⁶²

So, for instance, the Greeks' questioning of the procession of the Spirit from the Son was implicitly a heresy even before it was explicitly condemned by the Church. It is as if heresy has its own independent existence; the Church's job being to recognise and proclaim it. John's insistence on the implicit condemnation of every heresy, coupled with the fact that not all heresies are obviously so, means that the ability to recognise and define heresy is a skill which can only be exercised by churchmen, yet again putting a powerful weapon into the hands of the Church.

John's treatment of 'the heretic' continues the expansion of the concept which his discussion of 'heresy' initiated. Although in essence his understanding of the heretic remains faithful to the traditional notion, some expansion in the concept is apparent. There are, John writes, various ways of defining *haereticus*. One understanding of *haereticus* is simply as a person who has been excommunicated;⁶³ but as John has already made clear,

⁶¹*De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 837).

⁶²'...de quibus solum viris in sacris Litteris eruditis per subtilem considerationem apparet quomodo canonicae repugnant veritati, aut contentis in sacris Scripturis, vel doctrinae universalie Ecclesiae adversantur, & quod ex eis sequatur aliqua haeresis aliquorum generum praedictorum.' (Du Pin, col. 837).

⁶³*De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 838).

although not strictly incorrect, this is not in itself an adequate definition (due, as we shall see, to the heretic's inherently secretive nature, which means that the Church cannot guarantee to have excommunicated every heretic in existence. Another is *perversor sacrarum rerum*: a pervertor of sacred things - a definition which includes simoniacs.⁶⁴ Again, this is not quite inclusive enough for John; a more precise understanding is someone who thinks that the Catholic faith is false or contrived. This has the merit of including Jews, Muslims and all doubters. This is an astonishingly broad definition of the heretic; Berthold of Regensburg, for example, made a distinction between heretics, who were eternally damned, and mere doubters, who were not. Moreover, John's identification of Jews and Muslims is highly unusual at a time when the majority of polemicists agreed that technically Jews and Muslims were not heretics, although in practice the distinction tended to be blurred. These people would no doubt put forward an alternative understanding of the heretic, which John points out: they would say that just as a Catholic is anyone who, 'having been baptised by all the rites, does not pertinaciously adhere to anything contrary to the Law of Christ',⁶⁵ so a heretic is anyone who now considers or has considered themselves to be a Christian but who in spite of this holds stubbornly to views that are contrary to Catholic truth.⁶⁶ Broader still is the definition of heretics as 'all who pertinaciously adhere to any error which savours of heresy or which savours of heretical depravity'.⁶⁷ This again includes Jews and Muslims as well as (baptised) Christians. It is clear that John is trying to achieve as broad as definition of *haereticus* as possible. The more common definition of *haereticus*

⁶⁴*De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 838).

⁶⁵'Uno modo, sumitur *Catholicus*, pro omni rite baptisato, qui nulli contrario Legi christi pertinaciter adhaeret.' *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 837).

⁶⁶*De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 838).

⁶⁷'Quinto modo, sumitur *haereticus* pro omni qui pertinaciter adhaeret alicui errori haeresim sapienti, seu qui sapit *haereticam pravitatem*'. *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 838).

as 'one who, if he is convicted of heresy, and does not correct himself, is handed over to the secular court according to the form of the Church',⁶⁸ he rejects as inadequate. Defined thus, *haereticus* is limited to 'one who, having been baptised, or conducting himself as if baptised, pertinaciously doubts, or errs against the Catholic Faith'.⁶⁹ This excludes Jews, Muslims and those who err through ignorance rather than deliberate choice. John's conclusion is that a heretic is essentially someone who, 'having been given the truth, pertinaciously doubts or errs against the Catholic Faith'.⁷⁰ This carefully leaves the definition open to the inclusion of the unbaptised, but it is contumacy which is the hallmark of John's definition of *haereticus*, whether this be the contumacy of a baptised Christian who errs against his inherited faith or the contumacy of non-Christians who persist in holding to their own religion.

Interestingly, John attempts to define obstinacy (*pertinax*) more precisely.

Obstinacy is the persistence in an error which ought to be given up:

the erring one, however long he errs against the Faith, is not to be censured as pertinacious or as a heretic, if he is always ready to be corrected and to give up his error, when he has been legitimately corrected.⁷¹

What constitutes legitimate correction? In theory a person must recant if they discover for themselves that their belief is contrary to Catholic truth; so although more usual, correction by an outside agent is not strictly necessary.

⁶⁸'...scilicet pro illo qui si fuerit de haeresi convictus, & non correxerit se, secundum formam Ecclesiae tradendus est Curiae saeculari'. *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 838).

⁶⁹'haereticus est praecise baptisatus, vel gerens se pro baptisato, pertinaciter dubitans, vel errans contra Catholicam Fidem'. *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, cols 838-39).

⁷⁰'Et patet de isto dubio quid est dicendum, quia in descriptione haeretici, veritate data, ponitur ista particula, pertinaciter dubitans, vel errans contra Fidem Catholicam, quae particula non omnibus forsan est clara.' *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 839).

⁷¹'...errans quantumcunque errat contra Fidem, non est censendus pertinax, nec haereticus, si semper paratus sit corrigi, & errorem suum dimittere, quando scilicet legitime fuerit correctus.' *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, col. 839).

External correction satisfies 'accepted standards' when it has been clearly pointed out to the culprit that his position is contrary to Catholic truth. It is not enough merely to warn, the error must be clearly explained, although the status of the corrector does not affect the validity of the correction.⁷² Whether carried out by a prelate or not, once corrected the person is required to recant his error immediately and without argument:

For example, if someone says, out of ignorance, that there are two persons in Christ, and it is shown to him through the text of the Synod of Ephesus that this is the heresy of Nestorius which was damned by the same Synod, he cannot deny that it has been clearly shown to him that his assertion is contrary to Catholic truth...⁷³

Such correction, if ignored, would be sufficient to constitute an individual as a heretic.

The definition of heresy which John pursues consolidates all the changes in emphasis which had taken place since the beginning of the twelfth century. In the traditional Patristic definitions of heresy, mediated to medieval polemicists by Isidore of Seville and Gratian's *Decretum*, the emphasis was on heresy as a matter of the individual's choice of a theological error, although it introduced the element of contumacy which polemicists were to develop so successfully. During this period there was a gradual decrease in the significance of theological error or false doctrine, and a corresponding decline in interest in the concept of 'heresy' itself. At the same time the swing towards emphasising contumacy as the defining characteristic of the heretic

⁷²Although in other respects, as John points out, there are differences: unlike the laity a prelate can summon the culprit, compel him to recant publicly and punish him if he refuses to do so. Cf. Du Pin, col. 841.

⁷³'Verbi gratia: si quis diceret, ex ignorantia, duas personas fuisse in Christi, & sibi per textum Synodi Ephesinae ostenderetur quod haec est haeresis Nestorii per eandem Synodum damnata, non posset negare, quin esset aperte sibi ostensum quod assensio sua veritati Catholicae adversatur, & talis correctio est sufficiens.' *De fide et ecclesia*, 3 (Du Pin, cols 839-40).

undermined the importance of the initial theological error and focused attention on the attitude of the person in question, and thus on the individual heretic. This shift was supported and encouraged by the introduction of the institutional Church's role into the equation. The *de facto* identification of simony as a heresy, which was an integral part of the medieval Church's drive for control of its clergy, not only widened the scope of the definition of heresy but confirmed the Church's ability to condemn as a heretic almost anyone it wished. The assimilation of the concept of schism, previously distinct, into the concept of heresy similarly consolidated the medieval Church's intellectual and institutional control over all its members, clerical and lay.

These factors combined to throw the spotlight on the nature of the heretic. By the end of that century, although polemicists were still concerned to describe and refute specific heretical doctrines, the burning question was not so much 'what is heresy?' but 'what kind of person is a heretic?' Wakefield and Evans cite a definition of heresy which appears in a manuscript version of Alan of Lille's *De fide catholica* but which is omitted from Migne's printed version. Here the definition is of a heretic, rather than of heresy itself:

He is a heretic who, while keeping the outward appearance of Christian religion, devises or follows false opinion, either contemptuously or in contumacy or from a desire for human approval, earthly reward, or worldly pleasures.⁷⁴

Contained here are none of the earlier statements to the effect that a heretic is a person who chooses their own beliefs. The elements of contempt or contumacy make an appearance, in line with the trend towards emphasising these vices. So far nothing remarkable, but at the same time it is apparent

⁷⁴The ms. is Bern, Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek, Bongarsiana MS 335; this section appearing on f. 65^r. The quotation is in Wakefield & Evans, p. 2 & n. 9. They do not assign a date to the ms.

that the skeletal definitions which have been discussed so far can be fleshed out. Uniquely, the definition introduces what was to become for polemicists the vexing problem of the *species pietatis*, the appearance of piety which made the task of distinguishing heretics from true Christians so difficult. The definition thus reflects the increasing concern of polemicists to find a definition of heresy which could encompass those ethically-based 'reformist' sects which, if not entirely orthodox, were certainly not clearly unscriptural and unchristian in the way in which the Cathars, for example, were. It also anticipates the principal characteristics of the medieval concept of the heretic: vanity and pride. In this definition the importance of theological error, or false opinion, is kept to a minimum. Admittedly a heretic is a person who either 'devises or follows' false error (again ensuring that both heresiarch and simple believers are included), but the hedging around of this with other qualifications implies that adherence to false opinion alone does not constitute a heretic. It is true that a heretic necessarily believes in some kind of false doctrine, but this does not in itself create the heretic. It is the combination of this false doctrine with an obstinate defence of the same, whilst at the same time pretending to be a true Christian, which effects that. Again we can see the process of separating heresy and the heretic at work. To the question 'what kind of person is a heretic?' this definition answers: a deceptive, secretive person, who puts up a pretence of being a pious Christian, whilst all the time being saturated in pride, greed and vanity.

Chapter Two

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HERETIC

The definitions of heresy which were discussed in the previous chapter did not exist merely as abstract intellectual concepts, but were worked out in the polemical discussions about the way in which heresy manifested itself. This chapter will look at the basic characteristics of the heretic and the ways in which these were conceived and discussed by the medieval polemicists. Their discussions of the nature of the heretic were almost exclusively carried out in terms of the disease metaphor and animal symbols. Specific instances of the disease metaphor are numerous and only a few examples will be mentioned here.¹ Most common was the comparison with leprosy or cancer, with polemicists from all backgrounds speaking of heresy spreading like these diseases. Eckbert of Schönau wrote that the Cathars had:

multiplied throughout all lands, so that the Church of God is threatened with great danger from the evil venom which they pour out against her on all sides; for their message spreads like a cancer, and just as leprosy rapidly spreads far and wide, so the precious body of Christ is contaminated.²

Bernard of Fontcaude similarly spoke of the Waldensians' message as a 'perfidious virus' which they had 'vomited' throughout France.³ Was the language of disease in general and leprosy in particular a convenient metaphor, or did the description embody what polemicists and others took to be the concrete reality of the heretic's physical condition? Some examples

¹For other examples, see Moore, 'Heresy as Disease', pp. 1-6.

²'...ita per omnes terras multiplicati sunt, ut grande periculum paciatur ecclesia dei a veneno pessimo quod undique adversus eam effundunt. Nam sermo eorum serpit ut cancer ut quasi lepra volatilis longe lateque discurrit preciose christi membra contaminans'. *Sermones*, I (Harrison, vol. I, pp. 7-8).

³*Adversus Waldensium sectam*, Prologus (PL 204, 793).

seem to indicate that the description was nothing more than a metaphor - the quotation above from Eckbert, for instance, merely indicates the deployment of an image which usefully illustrated the way in which heresy could spread. Alan of Lille considered that the Waldensians, by virtue of their usurpation of the preaching office, were spiritual lepers, because they were tainted with mortal sin.⁴ Bernard of Fontcaude believed that 'the changeable colour of the body in leprosy represents the truth mixed with falsehood in a heretical man'.⁵ Moreover, the use of the metaphor in the discussion of other phenomena suggests that it had no specific correlation to heresy, but could be transferred to any group or practice which the institutional Church found objectionable and wished to control. The language of disease was also used in discussions about simony⁶ and homosexuality,⁷ for example. This could be due merely to the *de facto* identification between simony and heresy; on the other hand it suggests that the application of the disease metaphor to heresy should not be taken to indicate a unique and concrete relationship between the two. It is true that heretics were to be dealt with in the same manner as had traditionally been lepers. Bernard of Fontcaude quotes from the section in Luke's gospel, where Jesus cured a leper: 'Go, show yourself to a priest, and offer a gift, which Moses ordered as a witness to them' (Lk. 5: 12-16). The command is especially applicable to the case of heresy, because it is priests who are capable of discerning and judging who is a Catholic, and who is spreading the contagion of heresy. It is clear that Bernard interprets this passage as meaning that Jesus did not want a healed, but formerly leprous, man to mix with the crowd without the approval of a priest. Similarly

⁴*De fide catholica*, II: i (PL 210, 379).

⁵'In leprosi quippe corpore varius color, designat in haeretico homine veritatem falsitati permistam'. *Adversus Waldensium sectam*, II: i (PL 204, 798).

⁶E. g. C. 1, q. 1 c. 13 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 361) & d. p. c. 28 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 371); Gerhoch of Reichersberg, *Tractatus adversus simoniacos*, 4 (PL 194, 1340).

⁷Richards, *Sex, Dissidence and Damnation*, p. 143.

someone who has strayed from Catholic unity, even when he has repented, ought not to mix with the congregation of the faithful without the approval of a priest.⁸ Bernard is not merely illustrating the way in which heretics should be dealt with through an instructive New Testament example; in the medieval period lepers were segregated in just this way from the rest of the community. The similarities in the way in which the two were dealt with, however, does not in itself indicate anything more than a unified and practical approach towards the presence of 'infected' members within the community.

As a simple metaphor, the heresy/disease equation had certain uses. Contemporaries who were unable to explain the spread of infectious diseases were also puzzled by the inexplicable way in which heresy could spring up in places where it had been previously unknown, or was thought to have been eradicated; and the metaphor provided a convenient explanation for this state of affairs. Whether or not it provided more than a useful and easily recognisable image is another matter. Moore asserts that 'the comparison of heresy and disease provided not simply a casual or convenient metaphor, but a comprehensive and systematic model'.⁹ There is some evidence that heresy was considered to be an actual virus - like leprosy it was an air-borne poison which could infect at random;¹⁰ and it was generally believed that heretics frequented the homes of lepers.¹¹ Moreover, heretics were often described as displaying the same physical characteristics as lepers: 'The leper's tattered and filthy clothing, staring eyes and hoarse voice are also part of the standard depiction of the wandering preacher and the wandering

⁸*Adversus Waldensium sectam*, II: i (PL 204, 798).

⁹ 'Heresy as Disease', p. 9.

¹⁰ Moore, *Formation of a Persecuting Society*, p. 63.

¹¹ Thus the Anonymous of Passau: 'Docet eiam in domibus leprosorum'. *De causis heresum* (Patschovsky & Selge, p. 70).

heretic - all, as it were, *pauperes Christi*, or claiming to be'.¹² The widely held belief that leprosy heightened sexual desire, and that lepers were therefore sexually promiscuous, applied equally to heretics, who were often described as having magnetic powers of attraction (for both men and women) and of indulging in mass orgies with their followers.

Whilst it is undoubtedly true that the application of the language of disease to heresy provided more than a convenient metaphor, the whole question is complicated by the fact that heresy was also closely identified with sexual deviation, and that sexual deviation was itself linked to disease. Heresy was not only described in terms of leprosy, but also in the language of sexual crimes or diseases.¹³ Conversely, sexual, as well as religious, deviancy was described as 'leprous sores' which spread like cancer.¹⁴ In practice, heresy and sexual deviancy received similar theological and legal treatment.¹⁵ The inter-relationships between sexual deviation, disease and heresy do indicate that contemporaries saw some kind of causal relationship between them. The relationship is the connection which the medieval mind made between sin and bodily illnesses. The most serious mortal sin (heresy) was the equivalent of the most serious - and also mortal - physical disease (leprosy). Leprosy was in fact an outward and visible sign of the inner condition of the soul. All of this supports Moore's argument. He further suggests that 'although the model was of some antiquity, and the image continued to be used for a considerable time, it made a special contribution to the conception of heresy that prevailed in the middle of the twelfth century'.¹⁶ It certainly seems as if

¹²Moore, *Formation of a Persecuting Society*, p. 63. See also Moore, 'Heresy as Disease', pp. 5-6.

¹³Goodich, 'Sexual Deviation as Heresy', p. 17.

¹⁴Goodich, 'Sexual Deviation as Heresy', p. 18.

¹⁵Goodich, 'Sexual Deviation as Heresy', p. 14.

¹⁶'Heresy as Disease', pp. 9-10.

the frequency of the metaphor declined after the twelfth century - perhaps because the idea of leprosy as an outward and visible sign of mortal sin did not fit in with the increasing emphasis on the secretive and deceptive nature of the heretic. The disease metaphor was of limited utility to the polemicists; it was to be the concept of the *species pietatis* which provided them with their most flexible and powerful weapon.

If the imagery and language of disease was useful to describe the nature of heresy and the way in which it spread, the medieval mind found other convenient symbols, often drawn from biblical images, for the heretics themselves in animals. The sermons of Berthold of Regensburg are particularly full of this vivid kind of imagery. According to Berthold, the primary hallmark of heretics is that they teach in darkness and secret places, just like cats.¹⁷ One of his favourite images is of frogs and toads:

heretics are frogs, who, alas, are far too numerous and exceedingly poisonous, and appear not in the light, but in the darkness, in corners and hidden places, and they are more hostile to the Lord than frogs are to us, and they are more dangerous to men than frog's poison is to us.¹⁸

On other occasions he described heretics as toads, again because they lurk in the darkness and move about secretly;¹⁹ elsewhere they are 'worms and moles'²⁰ and locusts²¹ for the same reason. For Stephen of Bourbon heretics were as poisonous as scorpions.²² A more common description for the heretic was as a wolf in sheep's clothing, based on Matthew 7: 15. As Alan of Lille put it:

¹⁷Sermon 28 (Schönbach, p. 31); *Rusticanus de communis* 34 (Schönbach, p. 46).

¹⁸*Rusticanus de Dominicis* 20 (Schönbach, p. 58).

¹⁹Sermon 26 (Schönbach, p. 28); *Rusticanus de communis* 34 (Schönbach, p. 46); *Rusticanus de Dominicis* 10 (Schönbach, p. 62).

²⁰Sermon 30 (Schönbach, p. 45).

²¹Sermon 30 (Schönbach, p. 45).

²²*De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 350 (Lecoy de la Marche, p. 310).

There are certain heretics who imagine themselves to be righteous, although they are wolves attired in sheep's clothing. About whom the Lord speaks in the Gospel: *Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, for inwardly they are ravening wolves.*²³

Bernard of Fontcaude called those 'heretical demons and tyrants', the Waldensians, 'ravening wolves'.²⁴ Ralph the Ardent denounced the Cathars as diabolical wolves in sheeps clothing.²⁵

To Bernard of Clairvaux, the Cologne heretics were 'dressed like sheep, with the cunning of foxes and actions with the cruelty of wolves'.²⁶ The image of the 'little foxes' arose from two biblical references: Samson's destruction of the Philistine harvest by sending burning foxes into the fields, and a verse from Song of Songs 2: 15: 'Catch for us the little foxes, who are demolishing the vines; for our vineyards are in blossom'. The description of heretics as foxes was a commonplace in both polemical and other literature such as papal decretals;²⁷ but its greatest exposition occurs in Bernard of Clairvaux's *Sermones super Cantica Canticorum* (1144). Bernard had already deployed the image of the 'little foxes' in a general way in Sermons 63 and 64 to depict people within his own monastic community who were undermining their institution, but at the urgent request of Eberwin of Steinfeld, who considered this verse particularly applicable to heretics,²⁸ Bernard used this verse to depict heretics as foxes demolishing the vine which represents the Roman Church in Sermons 65 and 66. Here the heretics are compared to foxes, who

²³'Sunt quidam haeretici qui se justos esse fingunt, cum sint lupi veste ovina induti. De quibus Dominus in Evangelio dicit: *Attendite a falsis prophetis qui veniunt ad vos in vestimentis ovium, intrinsecus vero sunt lupi rapaces*'. *De fide catholica*, II: i (PL 210, 377).

²⁴*Adversus Waldensiam sectam*, Praefatio: vi (PL 204, 795).

²⁵*Homilia*, XIX (PL 145, 2011).

²⁶'Hi oves sunt habitu, astu vulpes, actu et crudelitate lupi'. *Super Cantica*, 66: I, 1 (Leclercq, Talbot, Rochais, vol. II, p. 178).

²⁷Dubarle, 'Les renards de Samson'.

²⁸*Epistola ad S. Bernardum*, 1 (PL 182, 677).

slink along the ground, rather than moving about openly.²⁹ Recent damage to the vine, preaches Bernard, indicates that the foxes have been at work, but 'that most ingenious animal' is so skilled at covering his tracks that his movements cannot easily be detected; so that 'Although the work is clear, the author does not appear'.³⁰ In the same way, the damage done to the Christian community - wives and husbands leaving their spouses, clergy and priests leaving their people and churches - indicates that heretics have been secretly at work. 'Is this not serious damage? Is this not the work of foxes?'³¹ Bernard is clear that the end for such heretics can only be destruction by fire, an end which Scripture foretells: 'The type precedes the deed in the foxes whose tails Samson set on fire'.³² Thus for Stephen of Bourbon heretics are the fulfillment of the type: like Samson's foxes they are tied together by the tail (by which he presumably means that at root all heretics are the same) but at the same time they present different faces to the world.³³ So vivid were these images in the minds of orthodox contemporaries that in many cases descriptions which were begun as simple metaphors gained a physical reality, and so frequently took concrete form in polemicists' reports of heretical activities. Heretics were thought to possess the same essential characteristics as the symbols which the metaphors employed,³⁴ and so took on the physical characteristics of the animals which they were supposed to typify. Stephen of Bourbon, for instance, reported that when a certain Catholic army was burning some heretics, it was noted that the heretics

²⁹*Super Cantica*, 65 : I, 2 (Leclercq, Talbot, Rochais, vol. II, p. 173).

³⁰*Super Cantica*, 65: II, 5 (Leclercq, Talbot, Rochais, vol. II, p. 175).

³¹*Super Cantica*, 65: II, 5 (Leclercq, Talbot, Rochais, vol. II, p. 176).

³²'Horum siquidem in facto Samson et succensis vulpium caudis figura praecessit'. *Super Cantica*, 66: V, 12 (Leclercq, Talbot, Rochais, vol. II, p. 186).

³³*De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 329 (Lecoy de la Marche, p. 278).

³⁴Grundmann, 'Der Typus', pp. 318-19.

always looked behind themselves when being led to the flames, 'in the manner of wolves'.³⁵

The disease metaphor and animal images provided powerful symbols for what the polemicists saw as the internal reality of heretical life. All the metaphors and symbols outlined above emphasise the deceptiveness of heresy, the way it spreads in secret (like disease) and in darkness (like foxes, cats, frogs and toads). The characteristic common to all of these is secrecy; and this became the essential motif of the polemic against heresy. For Stephen of Bourbon it was one of the four signs by which heretics could be recognised; their teaching, preaching, in fact all of their activities take place not only in secret but nearly always in darkness - in Stephen's eyes a quite logical consequence of their allegiance to the prince of darkness.³⁶ Bernard of Clairvaux likewise considered that secrecy was by far the most problematic feature of the popular heretical movements. For Bernard as for others, however, that very secrecy proved the inherently heretical nature of such sects. If, as they claim, they possess secret knowledge of God, they should disclose it, for the greater glory of God. If, on the other hand, they are heretics they should 'at least acknowledge that they are the clear enemies of the glory of God, who do not wish to reveal what they know would be to God's glory'.³⁷ Their refusal to do this is, according to Bernard, an entirely new phenomenon:

For although the Church has always had her foxes from the beginning, all of these were quickly detected and captured. The heretic fought publicly - for he was a heretic primarily for the

³⁵*De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 336 (Lecoy de la Marche, p. 286).

³⁶*De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 351 (Lecoy de la Marche, p. 311).

³⁷'Aut igitur Dei secretum ad gloriam Dei prodant; aut Dei negent mysterium, et minime se haereticos negent; aut certe nihilominus manifestos se fateantur inimicos gloriae Dei, qui nolunt manifestum fieri quod ei norunt fore ad gloriam'. *Super Cantica*, 65: II (Leclercq, Talbot, Rochais, vol. II, p. 174).

reason that he desired to conquer openly - and he yielded. So, therefore, those foxes were easily captured.³⁸

Heretics, he implies disapprovingly, are not what they used to be. Previous heretics 'had the single intention of obtaining glory through unique knowledge', but these ones are quite unmindful of their own glory or renown and prefer to remain hidden and 'proceed imperceptibly'. They are for this reason all the more 'malignant and cunning'. Learning from the example of the ancient heretics, who were easily discovered and quickly captured, present day dissidents have realised that concealment gives them greater room for manoeuvre; hence the dubious recruiting techniques and secret meetings.³⁹

The secrecy motif was particularly relevant to heretical claims to be the true Church. Berthold of Regensburg castigated heretics for having the temerity to make such a claim. If they are the true Church, why have they not come out into the light, as did the apostles, who preached publicly? The apostles' message has been preached openly for a thousand years, during which time the heretics' message has been concealed.⁴⁰ This theme is developed by Eckbert of Schönau who devoted the second of his thirteen sermons against the Cathars to the subject. Most of the sermon consists of Scripture verses aimed at proving that the Christian faith has always, from its inception, been openly proclaimed. Jesus himself did not teach in secret, but openly in

³⁸'Difficultatem occultatio facit. Nam cum Ecclesia semper ab initio sui vulpes habuerit, cito omnes compertae et captae sunt. Confligebat haereticus palam - nam inde haereticus maxime, quod palam vincere cupiebat -, et succumbebat. Ita ergo facile illae capiebantur vulpes'. *Super Cantica*, 65: I, 2 (Leclercq, Talbot, Rochais, vol. II, p. 172).

³⁹Quid faciemus his malignissimis vulpibus, ut capi queant, quae nocere quam vincere malunt, et ne apparere quidem volunt, sed serpere? Omnibus una intentio haereticis semper fuit, captare gloriam de singularitate scientiae. Sola ista malignior ceteris versutiorque haeresibus, damnis pascitur alienis, propriae gloriae negligens. Docta, credo, exemplis ceterum quae proditae evadere non valebant, sed confestim capiebantur, cauta est novo maleficii genere operari mysterium iniquitatis, eo licentius quo latentius'. *Super Cantica*, 65: I, 2 (Leclercq, Talbot, Rochais, vol. II, p. 173).

⁴⁰Sermon 23 (Schönbach, pp. 20-21).

synagogues and temples. The apostles, writes Eckbert pointedly, 'did not preach in hidden corners, nor in cellars, or in weaver's shops', but preached everywhere, not only in houses but in market places, not only before the common people but before princes.⁴¹ Paul considered himself bound to preach the gospel to all, Greek and barbarian, wise and foolish. The Cathars, in spite of their claim to be the sole possessors of the true Christian faith, do exactly the opposite:

But you, if you are as you say apostles of Christ, why have you lain hidden for such a long time? If you are the Church of God, as you say, why have you always walked in concealment up to this time?⁴²

The true Church cannot be hidden, just as a city placed upon a hill cannot be concealed.⁴³ The Cathars, he argues, are afraid to disclose their teaching, because when revealed it is so clearly false. Even new members of the sect are not entrusted with all their teachings, but are 'tested' for a number of years, until their loyalty has been assured.⁴⁴

The idea of secrecy as one of the hallmarks of heresy was soon brought to bear on the puzzling dilemma with which the ecclesiastical authorities were faced. How could sects which were apparently orthodox, but which contemporaries were convinced in their own minds were heretical, be convicted of heresy? Furthermore, heretical groups displayed a piety and morality which often contrasted painfully with that of the clergy. In the face of these attractive qualities, how could the laity be warned about the dangers

⁴¹*Predicauerunt non in angulis, non in cellariis, aut textrinis, sed sicut scriptura dicit, predicauerunt ubique, non solum in domibus sed et in foro et plateis ciuitatum, non solum coram plebe sed et coram regibus et principibus omnium terrarum...* *Sermones*, II (Harrison, vol. I, p. 28-29).

⁴²*Vos autem si estis sic ut dicitis, apostoli christi, quare tanto tempore latuistis? Si vos estis ecclesia dei, ut dicitis, quare usque ad hec tempora semper in abscondito ambulastis?* *Sermones*, II (Harrison, vol. I, p. 28).

⁴³*Sermones*, II (Harrison, vol. I, p. 28). Cf. Mt. 5: 14.

⁴⁴*Sermones*, II (Harrison, vol. I, p. 29).

of associating with such groups when their lifestyle was a Christian one? One way of solving this problem was to emphasise, as nearly all the polemicists did, that the heretics had the appearance, but not the reality, of sanctity and faith. The concept of the *species pietatis* was not a new one; its basis was to be found in Paul's description of the last days, when men will hold to the form of religion, but deny its power (2 Tim. 3:5). It is discernible in early writings against heresies,⁴⁵ but it reached its highest development in the later Middle Ages and so became a powerful weapon with which the medieval Church could combat the appeal of heretical groups.

The deceptiveness of the *species pietatis* is most clearly explained in a section the Anonymous of Passau's compilation discussing the signs by which heretics may be recognised. The Anonymous writes that heretics can be distinguished by two features: their morals and their way of speaking, but these are not readily perceived by most people (again implying the necessity for the institutional Church's skill in recognising and defining heresy). The lifestyle of a heretic is apparently Christian, almost exemplary: 'For they are composed and modest in their morals'. They take little pride in their clothing, they are not avaricious, they earn their living by honest work, they do not frequent taverns, dances or other such vanities. They avoid anger. Furthermore, they attend Church, making confession, taking communion and listening to sermons. Like their morals, their words are 'precise and

⁴⁵E. g. *The Treatise of Cosmas the Priest against the Bogomils*. Obolensky, *The Bogomils*, p. 121, cites a passage in which Cosmas describes the ways in which the heretics can be recognised: 'The heretics in appearance are lamb-like, gentle, modest and silent, and pale from hypocritical fasting. They do not talk idly, nor laugh loudly, nor show any curiosity. They keep away from the sight of men, and outwardly they do everything so as not to be distinguished from righteous Christians, but inwardly they are ravening wolves...' This passage shows some resemblances to one in Bernard of Clairvaux's sermon *Super Cantica* 65. See this chapter below, p. 84, n. 55.

modest'. They avoid slander, scurrility, levity, lying and oaths. They even avoid saying 'certainly' or 'truly', because this is thought to be an oath. All of this, however, is a false front which conceals their true nature. The fact that they work hard and study means that they have very little time for praying, and although they attend Church, they do so 'deceptively'. Nominally they accept the Church's institutions and practices, but in their minds they reject them. Although they are careful in their choice of words, it is significant, points out the Anonymous, that they never answer a direct question, so that if they are asked, for instance, whether they know the Gospels or Epistles, they reply 'what might these things teach me?'⁴⁶ The Waldensians are particularly notable for their *species pietatis*. Some sects are so obviously blasphemous (is the Anonymous thinking of the Cathars here?) that they can be very easily recognised, but the Waldensians manage to maintain an appearance of piety better than most:

Because they live justly before men and believe everything about God correctly and all the articles, which are contained in the Creed - they only blaspheme the Roman Church and the clergy, which it is easy for many of the laity to believe.⁴⁷

The Anonymous also singles out the Waldensians for their cunning and deceptive recruiting tactics, accusing them of ensnaring people under their guise as craftsmen and traders.⁴⁸ It is interesting to note that, even at this comparatively late date, the Anonymous seems to regard the Waldensians as credally orthodox. He is nevertheless clear that they are heretical, but their heresy lies more in their rejection of the Roman Church; thus picking up the

⁴⁶Anonymous of Passau, *Quomodo heretici cognoscantur* (Patschovsky & Selge, p. 74).

⁴⁷'...hec Leonistarum magnam habens speciem pietatis - eo quod coram hominibus juste vivant et bene omnia de deo credant et omnes articulos, qui in symbolo continentur - solummodo Romanam ecclesiam blasphemant et clerum, cui multitudo laicorum facilis est ad credendum'. Anonymous of Passau, *Quod secta Pauperum de Lugduno perniciosior sit quam cetera secte* (Patschovsky & Selge, p. 73).

⁴⁸Anonymous of Passau, *Werbungsmethoden der Waldenser* (Patschovsky & Selge, p. 75).

trend which was beginning to emerge in Bernard of Fontcaude's definition of heresy almost seventy years earlier.

Other writers show some concern, and not a little irritation, with the *species pietatis*. All of Stephen of Bourbon's four signs by which heretics can be recognised involve their hypocrisy and deceit. Their deceit is apparent in their usurpation of the preaching office (the first sign), because they trick the *simplices* into thinking that they are fit to preach, when they are actually incompetent to do so.⁴⁹ It is apparent in their recruiting tactics and the way in which they spread (the second sign), because they initially lull their targets into a false sense of security with with sweet and persuasive words, before filling them with the poison of their true beliefs.⁵⁰ It is apparent in their secretive nature (the third sign) from which their hypocrisy springs, leading them to commit such acts as feigning penitence.⁵¹ Above all, their deceit is obvious in their sophism and in their deliberate twisting of their words and actions to give the appearance of piety (the fourth sign) - a falsification which masks their true condition of incompetence.⁵² Elsewhere Stephen notes that heretics can disguise themselves under a variety of appearances and occupations, and for this reason are all the more dangerous. When one Waldensian was captured, he relates, he was found to be carrying the means to disguise himself as a member of various different crafts:

At one time he carried the clothes and signs of a pilgrim; at another the staff and iron tools of a penitent; at other times he represented himself as a shoemaker, or a barber, or a reaper, and so on. And others did the same.⁵³

⁴⁹*De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 349 (Lecoy de la Marche, pp. 307-10).

⁵⁰*De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 350 (Lecoy de la Marche, pp. 310-11).

⁵¹*De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 351 (Lecoy de la Marche, p. 311).

⁵²*De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 352 (Lecoy de la Marche, p. 311-14).

⁵³'Aliquando ferebat habitum et signacula peregrini, aliquando baculum penitenciarum et ferramenta; aliquando se fingeat sutorem, aliquando barbitonsorem, aliquando messorum,

Although these were actual disguises with a practical purpose, for Stephen they represent an inner reality which hints at the heretics' supernatural powers: their skill in disguising themselves was akin to that of Proteus, who in Greek mythology was the warden of Poseidon's sea animals and possessed the power of transforming himself into any form in order to evade unwanted questioning.⁵⁴ Bernard of Clairvaux likewise marvelled at the deceit of heretics:

Finally, if questioned about the faith, nothing is more Christian; if about conduct, nothing is more blameless: and what he says he shows in deeds. You may see the man, in witness to his faith, attending Church, honouring the presbyters, offering his service, making confession, sharing in the sacraments. What is more faithful? As far as his life and morals are concerned, he intimidates no-one, he deceives no-one, he elevates himself above no-one. Moreover, his cheeks are pale with fasting, he does not eat bread in idleness, he works with his hands and so sustains his living.⁵⁵

Caesarius of Heisterbach made a similar point, adding that this was the way in which the heretics obtained the trust of the people; only then did they begin to pour forth their poisonous doctrines.⁵⁶ Like the Anonymous of Passau, Alan of Lille singled out the Waldensians as particularly culpable in this respect: '*habentes speciem quidem pietatis*', citing 2 Tim. 3: 5.⁵⁷ Berthold of Regensburg remarked that on the surface nothing could appear sweeter than the heretics' words. In reality, all their prayers and preaching are full of

etc. *Alii similiter idem faciunt*'. *De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 343 (Lecoy de la Marche, p. 293).

⁵⁴*De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 343 (Lecoy de la Marche, p. 293).

⁵⁵'Denique si fidem interrogas, nihil christianius; si conversationem, nihil irreprehensibilius: et quae loquitur, factis probat. Videas hominem in testimonium suae fidei frequentare ecclesiam, honorare presbyteros, offerre munus suum, confessionem facere, sacramentis communicare. Quid fidelius? Iam quod ad vitam moresque spectat, neminem concutit, neminem circumvenit, neminem supergreditur. Pallent insuper ora ieiuniis, panem non comedit otiosus, operatur manibus unde vitam sustentat'. *Super Cantica*, 65: I, 5 (Leclercq, Talbot, Rochais, vol. II, pp. 175-76).

⁵⁶*Dialogus miraculorum* 5: 18 (Scott & Bland, vol. I, p. 338).

⁵⁷'Ovis etiam errabunda occidi non debet, sed ad caulas reduci. Similiter haeretici qui characterem habent Christianum, cogendi sunt verbis et verberibus, ut ad Ecclesiae redeant unitatem'. *De fide catholica*, II: xx (PL 210, 305).

poison, stinging like a basilisk which poisons everything that it sees. Similarly, anyone who comes into contact with heretical teaching under the *simulatio sanctitatis* will inevitably become a heretic, and its presence should therefore be avoided at all costs.⁵⁸

As far as orthodox contemporaries were concerned, the concept of the *species pietatis* had an essential part to play in the fight against heresy. As Grundmann has pointed out, the idea that the outward appearance of piety concealed a festering heretic underneath was 'particularly useful and necessary in the face of those sects which did not reject the Christian-evangelical ideal, but stretched it, such as the Waldensians or the Spirituals'.⁵⁹ It was necessary to discredit their apparent piety and zeal for evangelical living with the assertion: *speciem sanctitatis et fidei pretendunt, veritatem autem eius non habent*.⁶⁰ Inevitably, the phrase *religionis speciem simulantes* increasingly came to be used as synonym for the word 'heretic', a trend which is apparent in the decrees of the Council of Toulouse (1119) and which from the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) onwards is present in almost all papal bulls on heresy.⁶¹ However, the obvious utility of the concept did not prevent polemicists from damning heretics precisely because they did possess the *species pietatis*. For Bernard of Clairvaux the secrecy and hypocrisy of contemporary heretics made them much more dangerous than the ancient ones. They were the sort of people who strove to conceal their evil nature in order to be able to ensnare other people more easily:

⁵⁸Sermon 13 (Schönbach, p. 19).

⁵⁹'Es erwies sich als besonders brauchbar und nötig gegenüber solchen Sekten, die das christlich-evangelische Ideal nicht verwarfen, sonder überspannten, wie Waldenser oder Spiritualen'. 'Der Typus', pp. 317-18.

⁶⁰Grundmann, 'Der Typus', p. 318.

⁶¹Grundmann, 'Der Typus', p. 318, n. 14.

Therefore they take pains to appear good whilst doing evil to the good; they do not wish to appear evil, to give more scope to their malicious intentions. For neither is it the case that they cultivate the virtues amongst themselves, but gloss over their vices in such a way as to give them the colour of virtue. And so they give the wickedness of superstition the name of religion.⁶²

Berthold of Regensburg went further. For him it was the fact of the deceit, rather than the orthodoxy or otherwise of their beliefs, which actually created the heretic: 'You know that if your faith were true, which however it is not, you could still be damned through the fact that you deny that faith through fear, by open or concealed lying and perjury'.⁶³

We come now to the complex area of literacy and heresy, and in particular to the further problem which the question of literacy presented to the polemicists.⁶⁴ The theme of the *illitterati* heretic was a standard and long-lasting component of the wider concept of the heretic,⁶⁵ a component which Biller characterises as 'the general counterposition of the stupid and *illitterati* heretics and the catholic Church, with its written texts and its *viri litterati*. However, as he goes on to show, there are some important qualifications to be noted.⁶⁶ First, not all heretics were universally described as *illitterati*; one only has to think of the 'intellectual' heresies to see why this was so. In

⁶²'Ita ergo in malum bonorum boni apparere student; mali nolunt, ut plus liceat malignari. Neque enim est apud eos virtutes colere, sed vitia colorare quodam quasi virtutum minio. Denique superstitionis impietatem nomine religionis intitulant'. *Super Cantica*, 66: I, 1 (Leclercq, Talbot, Rochais, vol. II, p. 178).

⁶³'Sciatis, quod, si fides vestra vera esset, quod tamen non est, vos tamen dampnaremini eo, quod timore illam negatis apertis vel coopertis mendaciis et perjuriis'. Sermon 28 (Schönbach, p. 32).

⁶⁴On the general question of literacy in the Middle Ages see Bäuml, 'Varieties and Consequences of Medieval Literacy and Illiteracy'; Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*; Grundmann, 'Litteratus-illitteratus'; McKitterick, *The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe*; Stock, *The Implications of Literacy*. I do not propose to go into the question of literacy levels amongst heretics in detail; for this see *Heresy and Literacy*, esp. Biller, 'The Cathars of Languedoc and written materials'; Brenon, 'The Waldensian Books'; Paolini, 'Italian Catharism and written culture'; Patschovsky, 'The literacy of Waldensianism'.

⁶⁵A wider discussion of the history of this theme is contained in Biller, 'Heresy and Literacy'.

⁶⁶'The *Topos* and Reality of the Heretic as *Illitteratus*'. I am grateful to Dr. Biller for allowing me to read this article prior to publication.

addition, within the 'popular' heresies the heresiarchs themselves were sometimes portrayed as very clever, although here this has more the force of diabolical false cunning than the learned knowledge of the sort possessed by truly *litterati* academics. Here, however, we are dealing with the motif as it was applied to 'popular' heresies. Second, although it has generally been considered that the *litteratus*/*illitteratus* antithesis remained comparatively unchanged during the medieval period, it is Biller's contention that 'in fact the rise of the Waldensians in the late twelfth century brought considerable developments to parts of it'.⁶⁷ Third, he argues that the *illitteratus* motif - at least as far as fourteenth-century Waldensianism is concerned - may have had more correspondence to reality than has previously been supposed; in other words the *illitteratus* motif, although a stereotype, had some 'relationship with observed "reality", though not necessarily an exact and simple one. At best, these elements in the pictures of sects may be intelligent generalisations - and therefore simplifications - made by experienced observers...'⁶⁸ The particular problem with which the polemicists had to wrestle, however, was this: to all appearances the heretics led, as we have seen, an exemplary life, but they also appeared to their contemporaries to have an impressive command of the scriptures. At the same time, polemicists constantly depict the heretic as *illitteratus*, *idiota* and *rusticanus*. Bernard Gui, for example, noted how the Valdes and his followers possessed translations of the Scriptures and certain of the Fathers, which they read often amongst themselves; but he also describes them as being 'scarcely literate' (*modicum litterati*).⁶⁹ Berthold of Regensburg simply described the Waldensians as *stulti*

⁶⁷'The *Topos* and Reality of the Heretic as *Illitteratus*'.

⁶⁸'The *Topos* and Reality of the Heretic as *Illitteratus*'.

⁶⁹*Practica inquisitionis*, II: 1 (Mollat, vol. I, p. 34).

et rusticani, unvolch et idiote - 'stupid and uneducated, *unvolch* and ignorant'.⁷⁰

Before proceeding any further, however, some clarification of the Latin terminology is necessary. There is no need to rehearse in detail the arguments which others have put forward; Grundmann's insights into the precise meaning of these terms have long been accepted as the basis for any study in this area. It is sufficient here to emphasise that *litteratus* / *illitteratus* cannot simply be translated as 'literate' / 'illiterate' in the modern sense of the words. Grundmann takes these terms to refer not to two different levels of education, but to two different kinds of education. *Litteratus* was the world of Latin reading and writing which derived from the tradition of Roman antiquity and Patristic biblical thought; *illitteratus* was the world of the vernacular with its own oral tradition of poetry, history and saga, law and custom - a not necessarily uneducated world.⁷¹ More recent work has confirmed Grundmann's interpretations. As Clanchy has argued, the modern sense of 'literate' as a basic ability to read is very far from the medieval concept of *litteratus*, which had little to do with the specific skills of reading and writing;⁷² and as Stock points out the classical sense of *litteratus* as 'lettered' or 'learned' was, by the eleventh century, understood as a minimal ability to read Latin.⁷³ Bäuml adds certain qualifications to Grundmann's basic interpretations. Even those who were members of the *illitteratus* 'vernacular' world may still have been dependent on the written word in that their occupation or social status required them to have access to other people's reading and writing skills; such 'quasi-literates' should be classed

⁷⁰Sermon 30 (Schönbach, p. 45).

⁷¹'*Litteratus-illitteratus*', p. 14.

⁷²*From Memory to Written Record*, p. 232.

⁷³Stock, *The Implications of Literacy*, pp. 26-27.

with the *litterati*.⁷⁴ Such nuances mean that Bäuml prefers to think of literacy and illiteracy in terms of modes of communication, rather than personal skills or types of education.

The key question for this study, however, is how heretics could be described as *illitteratus* when the same polemicists also depict them as being in possession of, or at least familiar with, scriptural and other texts. Bearing in mind that polemicists were not accusing heretics of being illiterate in the modern sense, what precisely did they mean by the application of this phrase? The traditional focus for work in the area of heresy and literacy has been the *litteratus/illitteratus* antithesis; but such a focus is not particularly helpful in this context. Bäuml does point out that although the true *illitterati* (as opposed to the quasi-literates) were not unacquainted with the Scriptures and written vernacular narratives, their occupation and social status meant that they did not require access to literate skills but were 'functionally dependent on orally transmitted directives for the conduct of their lives'.⁷⁵ In terms of their mode of communication they were *illitterati*. The *litteratus/illitteratus* antithesis, therefore, does not go very far towards answering our question. As Stock indicates, it is the usage of *idiota* and its close ally *rusticus* which is in many ways more significant, these being 'words which in their philological setting convey the cultural barriers which after 1100 progressively separated the lettered from the unlettered'.⁷⁶ Classically *idiota* was understood as meaning a layman (as distinct from an expert) or an amateur, an ordinary person; although this could often have connotations of being uneducated, ignorant or inexperienced. In the

⁷⁴Bäuml, 'Medieval Literacy and Illiteracy', p. 246.

⁷⁵Bäuml, 'Medieval Literacy and Illiteracy', p. 247.

⁷⁶Stock, *The Implications of Literacy*, p. 27.

medieval period, although the original sense was retained in that *idiotia* could refer to a lay-brother or convert, it could also be taken to refer to the illiterate, unlearned or rustic. Similarly, the *rusticus* was more than the antithesis of his urban fellow. 'The *rusticus* was not only a serf, a villein, or simply a peasant; to speak *rustico more* was to communicate in an unlearned tongue for which there was no written counterpart based on grammatical rules'.⁷⁷ These distinctions serve to emphasise that the gulf between the literate and the illiterate was construed not only in terms of the ability to read, write or speak Latin, but also in terms of social status. The *idiotae* were a distinct group from the *litterati*, and the implication is that even if they were equipped with the necessary interpretative skills, it was not their proper function to be engaging in the exposition of Scripture. Pseudo-David of Augsburg wrote that the Church had justifiably excommunicated the Waldensians when it saw that they had usurped the preaching office, 'to which they were not called because they were *ydiote* and *layci*'.⁷⁸ The coupling of *idiotia* and *laicus* here is significant; not only are the Waldensians uneducated and therefore incapable of preaching the Word in fact, they are also non-professionals, and so are intrinsically unfit for the job. This is the force of Bernard Gui's remark that the Waldensians went around Lyons preaching from house to house, 'even though they were *ydiote* and *illiterati*'.⁷⁹

The distinctions which the usage of *idiotia* brings to bear on the problem, together with the apparent contradictions between polemical perceptions of the heresiarch and the *simplices*, point to another level of meaning contained within the polemicists' concept of literacy, at least as far as heretics are

⁷⁷Stock, *The Implications of Literacy*, p. 27.

⁷⁸'Cumque ecclesia videret, eos predicationis sibi officium usurpare, quod eis commissum non fuerat, cum essent ydiote et layci, prohibuit eos, ut debuit, et nolentes obedire excommunicavit'. *De inquisitione hereticorum*, 4 (Preger, p. 206).

⁷⁹*Practica inquisitionis*, II: 1 (Mollat, vol. I, p. 34).

concerned. As Clanchy points out, in the twelfth century *litteratus* was construed in terms of exceptional erudition, rather than the ability to read and write.⁸⁰ It is clear that some, perhaps a majority, of the heretics were not *litterati* in this sense. Even if they did have some knowledge of Scripture, they made little attempt to use this knowledge in the critical way which would mark them out as such. The Anonymous of Passau wrote that he had 'seen and heard an uneducated peasant (*rusticum ydiotam*), who recited Job word for word, and many others who knew the whole new testament perfectly'.⁸¹ Other examples given by the Anonymous show even more clearly how heretics could misuse their texts: because they were *layci ydiote* the translations which they were using contained derisory mistakes which no educated person could have made.⁸² Yet other polemicists noted that heretics frequently displayed erudition insofar as they were able to use their knowledge of Scripture (however it was acquired) to argue their own case and to attack the beliefs of their orthodox opponents. Eckbert of Schönau, for instance, wrote that the heretics he had met in Cologne 'were fortified with words of holy scripture which some of their sect appear to agree about, and they know how to defend their errors and rail at catholic truth with these...'⁸³ Once more the polemicists were left with a dilemma. Were such heretics (as opposed to heretics who could recite Scriptures which they had learnt off by heart) *litterati*? Once again the concept of the *species pietatis* proved useful. The essence of the orthodox argument was this: the heretics appear to be

⁸⁰Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, p. 231.

⁸¹'Vidi et audivi rusticum ydiotam, qui Iob recitavit de verbo ad verbum, et plures alios, qui totum novum testamentum sciverunt perfecte'. Anonymous of Passau, *De causis heresum* (Patschovsky & Selge, p. 71).

⁸²Anonymous of Passau, *De causis heresum* (Patschovsky & Selge, p. 71).

⁸³'Muniti sunt verbis sancte scripture que aliquomodo secte eorum concordare videntur [sic] et ex eis sciunt defendere errores suos et oblatrare catholice veritati...' *Sermones*, Praefatio (Harrison, vol. I, p. 3). It is interesting to note that Eckbert and the Anonymous witnessed two quite different activities; the former is describing people who can to some extent use their scriptural knowledge to argue their case, the latter people who have learned the scriptures by rote.

litterati, because they can read or at least recite Scripture, but in reality they are all *illitterati* - even those who skilfully defended their beliefs with arguments drawn from scriptural and Patristic authorities - because they cannot interpret these *auctoritates* correctly. Bernard Gui was able to describe the Waldensians as on the one hand possessing books which they often read amongst themselves and on the other hand as 'scarcely literate', not only because they were illiterate in the sense that they could not read Latin but more importantly because they understood virtually nothing of what they read.⁸⁴

It would seem, therefore, that a further level of meaning can be added to the *litteratus / illitteratus* concept: the idea of spiritual illiteracy. To be merely erudite, in the context of expounding Scripture, was not to be *litteratus*; the exposition itself had to be consonant with the judgement of the Holy Spirit and the teaching of the Roman Church. This point of view was already current in the eleventh century, as Stock has so eloquently pointed out,⁸⁵ and by the twelfth century it was a stock-in-trade of the polemicist. 'Ignorant peasants', wrote Eckbert, 'do not appropriate this verse in your defence, because you do not discern it correctly'.⁸⁶ Alan of Lille considered Peter Valdes to be a heretic because he preached not only 'without the authority of a prelate', but also 'without divine inspiration, without knowledge (*scientia*), without erudition (*litteratura*)'.⁸⁷ The Anonymous of Passau took it as a matter of course that 'uneducated lay people' (*layci ydiote*) could only

⁸⁴*Practica inquisitionis*, II: 1 (Mollat, vol. I, p. 34).

⁸⁵Stock, *The Implications of Literacy*, pp. 105-06.

⁸⁶'Rustici viles, nolite assumere verba hec in defensionem vestram, quia non recte discernitis ea'. *Sermones*, II (Harrison, vol. I, p. 30).

⁸⁷'...Waldus, qui suo spiritu ductus, non a Deo missus, novam sectam invenit, scilicet ut sine praelati auctoritate, sine divina inspiratione, sine scientia, sine litteratura praedicare praesumeret'. *De fide catholica*, II: i (PL 210, 377).

expound Scripture corruptly and falsely.⁸⁸ Amateur use of Scripture was distinctly dangerous, as Alan of Lille pointed out; not only would an individual inevitably fall into error this way, but he would also entangle others in his downfall: 'in what way will the illiterate preach, who do not understand the Scriptures? Is not their preaching to the ruin, rather than the rebuilding, of many people?'⁸⁹ As far as polemicists were concerned this was the crux of the problem of unauthorised preaching. Such people are illiterate in the sense that their interpretation of Scripture, expounded through their unauthorised preaching, is at best flawed and misleading, at worst fundamentally opposed to Catholic truth. The importance which polemicists attached to the correct interpretation of texts - be they Scripture or other *auctoritates* - is underlined when we remember that the *idiotae* could also be regarded as being in a condition of blessed simplicity, just as the early apostles, although 'unlearned' could nevertheless preach eloquently.⁹⁰ These *idiotae*, although in a similar condition to the *illitterati* heretics, presumably accepted the Church's interpretation of Scripture, and so their ignorance was an occasion for praise rather blame. Once again this leads directly to *superbia*, which underpins the concept of spiritual illiteracy. As far as the polemicists were concerned, it was not a sin in itself to be *idiotae* or *illitterati*, but such people should acknowledge their condition and humbly defer to those who have the skills necessary for the proper interpretation of Scripture. False pride in personal knowledge and individual exegetical abilities could only result in further sin and ultimately in damnation.

⁸⁸Anonymous of Passau, *De causis heresum* (Patschovsky & Selge, p. 71).

⁸⁹'Quomodo etiam praedicabunt illiterati qui Scripturas non intelligunt? Nonne eorum praedicatio potius est in ruinam multorum quam resurrectionem?' *De fide catholica*, II: i (PL 210, 379).

⁹⁰Stock, *The Implications of Literacy*, p. 29.

The idea of spiritual illiteracy is most significant for the way in which it places the skill of interpreting Scripture exclusively into the hands of the institutional Church. Moore argues that:

The rapidly rising level, use and prestige of literacy in the eleventh- and twelfth-century West benefited those who commanded it in all the expected ways, including that of defining their status and extending their power through the elaboration of a concept of heresy and the means of enforcing it both intellectually and practically.⁹¹

Just as the formal definitions of heresy show how the task of defining heresy became the prerogative of the Roman Church, so the development of the *litteratus/illitteratus* antithesis widened the gulf between the Church's own professionals and the non-professional laity and further strengthened the hierarchy's intellectual control over the laity. Biller notes this extension of the concept most clearly in the Anonymous of Passau compilation, 'where it mingles in a complex fashion with contrasts of number, power and social strata: in the Church there are many, there are philosophers and *litterati*, and there are princes, while among heretics there are few, the poor, workmen, women, and - as the opposite of *litterati* - *idiotae*'.⁹² As both Grundmann and Clanchy acknowledge, by the twelfth century *litteratus/illitteratus* had become synonymous with another antithesis: *clericus/laicus*. *Clericus* meant *litteratus*, *laicus* meant *illitteratus*, and vice versa.⁹³ In medieval usage *litteras discere* was virtually interchangeable with becoming a monk or cleric; the same phrase with reference to a child meant to enrol a child into the monastic life.⁹⁴ However, this can only be one aspect of the concept. *Litteratus/illitteratus* did not exclusively equal cleric/layperson; some

⁹¹Moore, 'Literacy and the making of heresy', p. 33.

⁹²'The *Topos* and Reality of the Heretic as *Illitteratus*'; 'Heresy and Literacy', p. 5.

⁹³Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, pp. 224-30.

⁹⁴Grundmann, 'Litteratus-illiteratus', p. 9.

Latinate lay-people did after all exist.⁹⁵ What came primarily to distinguish the *litterati* from the *illitterati* was their capacity to interpret the *auctoritates* correctly. Heretics arose from the ranks of those proud *illitterati* who were unable to acknowledge the reality of their ignorant condition.

The polemical discussions of all these characteristics were a way of working out how heresy manifested itself in the world. As we have seen, the metaphors and symbols which polemicists used to discuss the characteristics of the heretic were more than images which were helpful in explaining the nature of heresy to the faithful. The language of disease was a way of describing the inward condition of the heretic's soul; moreover, this inward condition was often outwardly displayed in physical diseases. The animal symbols of which polemicists were so fond were more than useful illustrations; heretics were thought to possess many of the same characteristics as the animals which were used to symbolise them. These descriptions represented the reality of the heretic's nature. Above all, it was secrecy and deceit which characterised the life of the heretic; the *species pietatis* becoming the dominant motif of the medieval polemic against heresy. The concept of the *species pietatis* was the most useful weapon in the polemicists' armoury. It enabled polemicists to explain why the apparently devout groups of religious enthusiasts were really heretical. More importantly, it meant that the skill of recognising and proclaiming heresy was only able to be exercised by the clergy. This consolidation of the medieval Church's control over the lives of the laity is also apparent in the concept of spiritual illiteracy, which denied even the orthodox laity the

⁹⁵Paolini, 'Italian Catharism', p. 84, points out that this was particularly the case in the Italian cities. It is significant that the only polemical texts to be written by laymen, Salvo Burci's *Liber supra Stella* and George's *Disputatio inter Catholicum et Paterinum haereticum*, arose within this context. Grundmann, 'Litteratus-illiteratus', p. 11 notes that those sons of monarchs who were not destined for the throne were taught to read and write Latin.

ability properly to interpret Scripture, reserving this task also to the clergy. All of these characteristics increasingly focused polemicists' attention on the nature of 'the heretic'. From there it was a natural step to ask what caused individuals to become heretics.

SECTION II

THE ORIGINS AND CAUSES OF HERESY

Chapter Three

THE CAUSES OF HERESY

This chapter will look at the immediate causes of heresy in individuals as they were conceived by medieval polemicists. Their views on the historical origins of particular sects and the ultimate provenance of heretics in general will be dealt with in the last two chapters. Before we can begin to look at the immediate causes of heresy, however, some reference must be made to modern interpretations of the question. This will necessarily be a brief discussion of some representative viewpoints from both sides of the argument and will inevitably gloss over the subtleties of some scholars' arguments and omit others altogether. It is necessary, however, in order to highlight the contrast between modern and medieval interpretations of the origins of heresy, and to show how far removed from reality were medieval discussions of the same question. The first section of this chapter will therefore look at two nineteenth-century arguments put forward by Schmidt and Douais; then the post-war debate between Morghen and Dondaine; finally the most recent contribution to the problem by Moore. We can then move on to look at medieval polemicists' interpretation of the causes of heresy.

Citing evidence from Eberwin of Steinfeld and Reinerius Sacconi, Schmidt states his position quite unequivocally at the beginning of his work: 'Some vague reminders, preserved in the [Cathar] sect itself, places its cradle in the oriental countries of Europe, and more especially in those countries

inhabited by Slav populations'.¹ Schmidt identifies a primitive Catharism from which both Albigensian Catharism and Bogomilism derived. He concedes that although the origins of this primitive Catharism are undoubtedly incoherent and underdeveloped, they are 'the germs of ideas which only become complete later, by modifying themselves in the terrain which received them, when they were combined with elements of another kind'.² Schmidt points to certain general traits in primitive Catharism: a distinction between a good and bad principle, the condemnation of the Old Testament as the work of the Devil, the opinion that Christ had only the appearance of humanity, the rejection of baptism by water, the communication of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands, the condemnation of marriage and the eating of meat, the denial of the real presence and refusal of veneration of the cross or images; and he is clear that it is absolute dualism which underpins this early system, although it began to move toward the position of mitigated dualism at an early stage.³ Schmidt places the origin of this absolute dualism firmly in the east. He points out that Cathar dualism was propagated as much in the east as in the west, noting the presence of the heresy in Macedonia, Thrace and Greece. At the same time the first traces of the heresy are apparent in the west from the end of the tenth century, arriving there via two different routes: one through Bosnia and Dalmatia into Italy and thence to France; the other through Hungary into north Germany. These first traces of heresy were diverse in character; eastern Catharism was initially more subtle and mythological than that in the west, where it tended to have a more practical tendency towards

¹'De vagues souvenirs, conservés dans la secte elle-même, placent son berceau dans les pays orientaux de l'Europe, et plus spécialement dans les contrées habitées par des populations slaves'. *Histoire et doctrine*, vol. I, pp. 1-2.

²'c'étaient des germes qui ne se complétèrent que dans la suite, en se modifiant suivant le terrain qui les reçut, ou en se combinant même avec des éléments d'un autre genre'. *Histoire et doctrine*, vol. I, p. 8.

³*Histoire et doctrine*, vol. I, p. 9.

ascetic practices and opposition to the practices of the Church hierarchy.⁴ It was not until the twelfth century that the Cathar system became fully developed; it was during this period that mitigated dualism, up to this point confined to the east, was established in the west alongside primitive absolute dualism.⁵

Although Schmidt links western Catharism to Balkan dualism, he makes no claims as to the precise ancestor of Catharism. A much more specific view was put forward toward the end of the nineteenth century by Douais,⁶ who sees the Cathars as the direct descents of the ancient Manicheans. Douais traces five historical forms of Manicheism. The first and earliest stage covered the period of its struggle with the Empire and the Papacy from the third to the fifth centuries;⁷ the second was period of its establishment in the lower Danube from the third to the seventh centuries, during which time the direct disciples of Mani became sectaries escaping from the rigour of imperial law.⁸ The most crucial stages, for Douais' purposes, are the third and fourth forms of Manicheism: the Paulicians of the seventh century and the Bogomils of the tenth. Douais argues that the Paulicians were related to Paul of Samosata in name only, being in reality the direct sons of Manicheism. By the tenth century a fourth form of Manicheism - Bogomilism - had developed in Bulgaria, from where they spread through the Balkans into the Slav countries and Greece.⁹ In the eleventh century Manicheism entered into its most successful phase, spreading over the whole of the east. Like Schmidt, Douais argues that the Bogomil heresy took two routes into

⁴*Histoire et doctrine*, vol. I, p. 10.

⁵*Histoire et doctrine*, vol. I, p. 11.

⁶*Les Albigeois*.

⁷*Les Albigeois*, ch. 4.

⁸*Les Albigeois*, ch. 5.

⁹*Les Albigeois*, ch. 6.

the west: one through Bosnia and Dalmatia and so into Italy and France, another through Hungary and into northern Germany.¹⁰

Such ideas inevitably provoked a backlash of opposition, which reasserted the importance of religious factors for the origins of heresy in the west. Grundmann's work led the call for a return to the consideration of religious factors, and drew attention to similarities between the various orthodox and heterodox religious movements of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.¹¹ During the post-war period, however, the debate has been dominated by two figures: Morghen and Dondaine. Morghen's thesis is that the emergence of western heresy can be accounted for by indigenous religious and spiritual factors. What other scholars take to be traces of dualism in incidents of heresy in the eleventh century, Morghen explains as traces of a specifically Christian dualist and ascetic tradition. His position did not significantly change; his article 'Problèmes sur l'origine de l'hérésie au moyen-âge' restates his initial position, although taking into account newer publications such as Puech and Vaillant's edition of *The Treatise of Cosmas the Priest against the Bogomils*. Dondaine's 1952 article, 'L'origine de l'hérésie médiévale', was a reply to Morghen's *Medievo Cristiano*.¹² Dondaine sums up Morghen's argument in that work as follows: the heterodox currents which signalled the onset of heresy in the west were manifestations of the religious and civil conscience of the laity and the desire for a spiritual life. Any external causes of heresy are denied; the cause is to be found solely in the religious and social milieu in which heresy arose.¹³ From those few sources which fulfil his rigorous criteria Morghen finds the first heterodox manifestations in the west

¹⁰*Les Albigeois*, ch. 7

¹¹*Religiöse Bewegungen*; 'Neue Beiträge'.

¹²First edition Bari, 1944.

¹³Dondaine, 'L'origine', p. 47.

to be of a pronounced ascetic type, inspired by an ethical dualism and at the same time opposed to the prerogative of the ecclesiastical hierarchy; he denies *a priori* any Manichean influence on these movements.¹⁴ To the objection (hard to deny) that some traces of dualism are apparent in, for example, the rejection of marriage or abstinence from meat, Morghen argues that such traits can be accounted for by a Christian dualist tradition which was based on a literal interpretation of the dualism, reflected in the God/Mammon antithesis, inherent in the gospel.¹⁵

Dondaine's criticism of Morghen's thesis rests on a number of points. First, he questions whether the thesis in *L'eresia nel medioevo* - the central chapter of *Medioevo Cristiano* - is sufficiently critical, from a historical point of view, to allow for such a conclusion. This is primarily because Morghen is, in Dondaine's opinion, highly selective with his sources, eliminating any which he considered to be biased by 'theological interpretations', to an extent which makes his thesis highly vulnerable.¹⁶ Second, it is clear that for Dondaine, Morghen applies too generic and abstract a concept of heresy to what were in fact quite disparate groups. He considers Morghen's assertion that a radical opposition to the Roman Church and a unique New Testament inspiration was the essential and universal trait of medieval heresy by examining the case of primitive Waldensianism. If it were the case that all medieval heresy was inspired by the evangelical precept, why were the beliefs of Valdes and his first disciples so different from those of the first Cathars? The inspiration of the Waldensian movement was a conversion to the ideal of evangelical poverty and preaching. There is not trace of dualist

¹⁴Dondaine, 'L'origine', pp. 48-49.

¹⁵Dondaine, 'L'origine', p. 49.

¹⁶Dondaine, 'L'origine', pp. 50-51.

inspiration in this case; moreover the early Waldensians were vigorous opponents of the Cathars.¹⁷ Third, in reply to Morghen's comparison between the doctrines of ancient Manicheism and medieval heresy in its initial stages, Dondaine maintains that not enough is known about the metaphysics, cosmology and so on, of Manicheism.¹⁸ Fourth, Dondaine ridicules Morghen's argument that such traces of dualism as are apparent in medieval heresy may be explained by reference to a tradition of Christian dualist thought. It is impossible, according to Dondaine, to suppose that such a tradition could have been transmitted uninterrupted from the apostolic age through dualist heresy - Marcionism, for instance - only to undergo a sudden renaissance in the eleventh century. Similarly incredible is the idea that it could have continued in a heterodox form from Patristic thought into the high Middle Ages. If in fact medieval heresy is the result of autonomous reflection on the gospels, why does it suddenly make an appearance after an interval of seven or eight centuries? Dondaine delivers his *coup de grâce* by referring to the case of Leutard, a peasant in the diocese of Châlons in 1000 who left his wife, broke a crucifix in his local church, taught that it was not necessary to pay tithes, rejected the Old Testament and followed his own manner of interpreting Scripture. Can such bizarre actions, asks Dondaine sceptically, really be considered as part of the awakening of a new religious conscience amongst the laity?¹⁹ Dondaine rounds up these arguments by examining Schmidt's list of the principal heterodox motifs of the recorded cases of heresy in the eleventh century, and concludes that these motifs correspond, point by point, to those of Bogomilism - a question which Morghen ignores completely, even in the second edition of *Medioevo Cristiano*

¹⁷Dondaine, 'L'origine', p. 52.

¹⁸Dondaine, 'L'origine', p. 52.

¹⁹Dondaine, 'L'origine', p. 53.

which was published after important work on the Bogomils had appeared.²⁰ The omission of the Bogomils from Morghen's thesis is Dondaine's fifth and most important criticism and he devotes some time to proving similarities between the Bogomil and Cathar beliefs and practices.²¹ Dondaine's conclusion is that the correspondence between the two leaves no doubt as to the origins of the Cathars, although he does concede that Catharism had undergone some process of change and was not simply an extension of Bogomilism. Nevertheless, 'the western Cathars were the sons of the Bogomils, themselves the inheritors of distant Manicheism.'²²

That the Bogomils were directly descended from the Manicheans has been established by Obolensky in *The Bogomils*, but proving the link between the Bogomils and the Cathars has been more problematic. Dondaine's publication of Anselm of Alessandria's *Tractatus de hereticis*, however, gave a considerable impetus to the theory of eastern descent, providing as it did further support for contention that Catharism had entered the west via two routes from the Balkans. The evidence from Anselm's treatise, together with that from Eberwin and Reinerius previously cited by Schmidt, greatly strengthened the thesis which had been put forward earlier by Runciman in *The Medieval Manichee*, a recapitulation of the old thesis of a descent for western Cathars from the Bogomils and the Paulicians. This side of the debate was developed by Puech, although he can be said to take a mediating position within the debate, who notes that circumstances such as commercial traffic, military expeditions, the Crusades and pilgrimages facilitated a flow of ideas between east and west. This supposition is strengthened by factors

²⁰Dondaine, 'L'origine', pp. 55-56.

²¹'les Cathares occidentaux étaient fils des Bogomiles, eux-mêmes héritiers du lointain Manichéisme'. Dondaine, 'L'origine', pp. 59-74.

²²Dondaine, 'L'origine', p. 77.

such as the missionary zeal displayed by the Paulicians, who were the heirs of 'that great itinerant and conquering gnosis which had been... the Manichean religion'.²³ Puech offers a number of pieces of evidence in support of his thesis. First he refers to Eberwin of Steinfeld's letter, which reports that some heretics burnt at Cologne in 1143 defended themselves by maintaining that their beliefs had been hidden since the time of the martyrs and had lingered in *Graecia* (which Puech takes to refer to Byzantium) and *aliae terrae* (the Slav countries).²⁴ Second, he notes that the name 'Cathar' derives from *Catharistae* - the name which Augustine gave to a particular branch of the Manicheans - which is Greek in origin.²⁵ Third, and perhaps most importantly, he puts great emphasis on the *Tractatus de hereticis*, accepting the information given about the development and spread of dualism by Anselm of Alessandria.²⁶ Fourth, he points out that all the subsequent history of Languedocian and Italian Catharism is closely bound up with influences coming out of eastern Europe, citing evidence from the *Tractatus de hereticis*, the *De heresi Catharorum* and the Acts of the Council of Saint-Felix of Caraman.²⁷ Fifth, he cites evidence which supports in a general manner his contention that the Cathars in Italy and southern France had contact with the Balkan communities.²⁸ Finally he turns to a group of statements which concern the origins of the heretical church in Bosnia and its relationship with eastern Bogomilism and western Catharism. Against the 'romantic excesses' of Racki and his school, who deny the existence of any heterodox influences on Bosnian medieval Christianity, Puech argues that

²³'héritiers en cela de cette grande gnose itinérante et conquérante qu'avait été, en se réclamant de l'exemple de saint Paul, la religion Manichéenne'. Puech, 'Catharisme médiéval et Bogomilisme', p. 62.

²⁴PL 182, 679.

²⁵'Catharisme médiéval et Bogomilisme', pp. 63-63.

²⁶'Catharisme médiéval et Bogomilisme', pp. 64-65.

²⁷'Catharisme médiéval et Bogomilisme', pp. 66-67.

²⁸'Catharisme médiéval et Bogomilisme', pp. 67-68.

heresy did have an effective and important presence in Herzegovina and Bosnia from the last part of the twelfth century up to the Turkish conquest in 1463.²⁹ Taking all this evidence together, Puech concludes that it cannot be denied that 'the Catharism of the west had effective, precise, profound and self-determining relations with eastern Bogomilism'.³⁰

There are two questions which the theory of eastern descent finds it difficult to answer. First, it does not explain the question of why, given the case that heresy in the eleventh-century west was imported by eastern missionaries, that transplant was so spectacularly successful. Second, whilst being a valid explanation for the origins of the Cathars, it is much less convincing in the case of 'reformist' sects such as the Waldensians. Greater consideration should be given to Morghen's view that the ascetic traits discernible in primitive Waldensianism can be explained as the result of a recurring Christian tradition. There are undeniably problems in identifying this tradition as formally dualist, since the dualism inherent in Christian thought (such as that contained in the later medieval mystics, for instance) has always been one in which the evil principle was created by, and subordinate to, the good principle; admittedly making it intrinsically different from absolute dualism but bringing it very close to the position of mitigated dualism. However, if we look at the traits displayed by the eleventh-century incidents as those of an ascetic tradition which was in itself dualism of a sort (that of the God/Mammon antithesis), based on evangelical precepts, the situation becomes much less inexplicable. Viewed from this perspective, Dondaine's ridiculing of Morghen's argument is puzzling. Why should it be so

²⁹'Catharisme médiéval et Bogomilisme', pp. 68-71.

³⁰'il n'est pas, ou il n'est plus, niable que le Catharisme d'Occident n'ait eu avec le Bogomolisme oriental des relations effectives, précises, profondes, et même déterminantes'. 'Catharisme médiéval et Bogomilisme', p. 71.

incredible that periodic bursts of asceticism should punctuate the life of the Church - even at intervals of seven or eight centuries? If ascetic ideals result even in part from reception of evangelical injunctions such as 'if you would be perfect, go and sell all that you have', it is hardly surprising, given the ubiquity of the text in question, that at various points in time people decide to do just that. Cannot the whole history of the Church be viewed as one of a recurring desire for a return to the apostolic life, and the Church's attempts to control that desire? In any case, Dondaine is quite incorrect in saying that a period of eight or so centuries had intervened with no trace of ascetic aspirations. It is not the case that the preceding centuries had been free of ascetic aspirations, but rather that the institutional Church's response to those aspirations had altered, because what had previously been a manageable and even desirable practice now threatened to spin out of control. Dondaine appears to view heretical movements as an entirely separate phenomenon from orthodox evangelical movements and thus ignores Grundmann's significant identification of the similarities between 'orthodox' and 'heretical' ascetic movements. This omission crucially undermines his argument. The boundaries between the two, it is now widely accepted, were to say the least extremely fluid. One wonders how, in this case, he would explain the rise of the Mendicant movement. If Dondaine's separation of orthodox and heretical ascetic movements is accepted, then the sudden appearance of popular heresy in the eleventh century after such a long interval is certainly difficult to explain without recourse to outside influences. If, on the other hand, those movements are viewed as a seamless whole, it becomes much easier to explain its appearance in terms of indigenous western factors.

A return to Schmidt's arguments is even more illuminating in this respect. Having stated as a basic premise that absolute dualism entered the west from the east, he then says that by the end of the ninth century, issues such as the disputes between the Papacy and the Patriarchy and the animosity which this aroused against the west, and the imposition by the Papacy of the celebration of worship in Latin, meant that circumstances were singularly favourable, in the Slav countries, for the development and propagation of doctrines opposed to the system of the Orthodox Church'.³¹ Moreover the isolated position of Christians in the Slav countries, where Christianity had only been established comparatively recently, meant that individual Christians, although numerous, lacked orthodox guidance. This fact, coupled with a native tradition of venerating a number of deities, meant that the Slav peoples were inherently predisposed to accept dualism. Much more speculatively, Schmidt puts forwards the suggestion that eastern Cathar dualism came out of Greco-Slav monasteries in Bulgaria, in which traces of earlier Manicheism had been preserved.³² In other words, Schmidt finds in the indigenous conditions of the Slav countries a situation conducive to the development of dualism. What is startling is not the argument itself, which is perfectly convincing, but the fact that a line of reasoning which is quite acceptable as a theory for the origins of heresy in the east should be so ridiculous when applied to the west.

The crux of this whole problem of the historical origins of heresy, it seems, lies in defining the extent to which Christian ascetic practices and formal dualism were intertwined. This is particularly essential in view of the fact

³¹'Dès la fin du neuvième siècle, les circonstances étaient singulièrement favorables, dans les pays slaves, au développement et à la propagation de doctrines opposées au système de l'Église orthodoxe'. Schmidt, *Histoire et doctrine*, vol. I, p. 2.

³²Schmidt, *Histoire et doctrine*, vol. I, pp. 2-8.

that much of the case for the theory of eastern descent has rested on a comparison between Cathar and Bogomil doctrines. Schmidt and Dondaine, for example, have both drawn up comparative tables which they argue prove the interdependence between the two.³³ Dondaine's chart has rightly been criticised as inconclusive; as Russell points out, the evidence presented in it is only overwhelming if the eleventh-century Cathars are taken together as a unified group.³⁴ Puech, too, seems to feel that Dondaine's argument is, on this point at least, uncertain. If we return to the Dondaine-Morghen debate, we find considerable disagreement over the theological interpretation of certain traits display by eleventh-century heretics. Clearly any assertion of two equally powerful and opposing principles, when it occurs, must be counted as a formally dualist doctrine; but other beliefs - abstinence from meat, to give one example - are much more difficult to define. Dondaine interprets this example as a specifically dualist characteristic, Morghen as a traditional Christian ascetic practice. As Obolensky has pointed out, 'the boundary between Christian asceticism and a dualistic conception of Matter, though it is absolute in theory, could often in practice become very narrow'.³⁵

Already in the first century there appeared within the Christian Church a false conception of asceticism, based on the belief that complete continence, which Christ and St Paul regarded as a desirable path for a minority of chosen souls, is obligatory for all the faithful and a necessary condition of salvation. It is not surprising to find that this distorted view of asceticism, which arose from an over-emphasis laid on certain moral precepts of the Gospels, often proved itself incapable of resisting the infiltration of a background of Gnostico-Marcionic dualism.³⁶

³³Schmidt, *Histoire et doctrine*, vol. II, pp. 272-74; Dondaine, 'L'origine', pp. 59-61.

³⁴'Interpretations', p. 37.

³⁵Obolensky, *The Bogomils*, p. 21.

³⁶Obolensky, *The Bogomils*, p. 19.

What is true for the period which Obolensky is discussing is also true for our period.³⁷ The fluidity of the boundaries between Christian asceticism and dualist theory means that Dondaine's absolute identification of 'dualist' traits in eleventh-century heterodox incidents rests on shaky foundations; conversely Morghen's identification of those traits as arising from a Christian dualism is not so ridiculous as it might first appear. Stock's thesis is pertinent here, since his concept of 'textual communities' should remind us that autonomous groups which have access to the same texts - in this case the Scriptures - may reasonably be expected to evolve similar beliefs based on those texts.

None of this, of course, is to claim that all western heretical movements were inspired solely by a desire for a return to the apostolic life, or to deny that there were eastern dualist influences on western sects. Dondaine's criticism that Morghen applies too homogenous a concept of heresy to such groups is a warning to which we would do well to pay attention. Nor should we ignore the complex social and economic conditions within which heresy arose and was fostered. However, it is a fundamental premise of this thesis that, whatever the precise factors which gave rise to heresy in the eleventh century, they were indigenous to the west and were in a large part connected with changes which had taken place within the medieval Church itself. This applies as much to the appearance of the Cathars as it does to the Waldensians, although it does not explain why some people chose to go down one particular theological route and some another.

³⁷On asceticism in general, see the article 'Askese' in *TRE*, esp. section VI. For the medieval period see Leclercq, 'Western Christianity'.

Recently the debate has been moved beyond its original confines. Most importantly the fundamental premise on which the cases of both Morghen and Dondaine rested - that there was such a phenomenon as a coherent heretical movement, 'or at least a coherent pattern of heresy', in eleventh-century Europe - has been seriously questioned by Moore.³⁸ His argument is that the differences between such heterodox incidents as are recorded are far more striking than their similarities, and rejects the theory of eastern descent. Much more plausible is the theory that a native tradition of dissent, arising from a common desire for ecclesiastical reform, was the original source of western heresy, since this tradition was already established by the time eastern heretical influence on the west is apparent.³⁹ Moreover, if the thesis of eastern infiltration is correct, how can one account for the apparent absence of heterodox incidents during the second half of the eleventh century? The answer to this last question is found in those impulses which were generated, and for a time satisfied, by the Gregorian reform programme 'In this perspective', Moore comments 'the debate about the relationship between Bogomil influence and heretical origins in the eleventh century appears not so much insoluble as unimportant.'⁴⁰

Undoubtedly the pastoral failure of the mendicant movement after its initial successes, at the same time as the medieval Church continued its development as a monolithic corporation, is an important consideration. The Gregorian reform programme had centralised the Church's institutional structures, consolidated its grip on the clergy, removed lay control and given priority to the its canonical functions. The eucharistic and liturgical

³⁸*Origins of Medieval Heresy*, p. 32.

³⁹*Origins of European Dissent*, p. 264.

⁴⁰*Origins of Medieval Heresy*, p. 35.

developments which took place in the twelfth century, in addition to a growing urbanisation with which the Church's pastoral mechanisms were unable to keep pace, increased the alienation between clergy and laity. All of this encouraged in the medieval Church a rigidity which ensured that it was ultimately unable to satisfy the ascetic and spiritual aspirations which it had revived and fuelled - a rigidity which culminated in the Fourth Lateran Council's proscription of new orders. Other factors, implicit in the spiritual and intellectual climate of the day, were also at work: the emergence of a hitherto unseen lay spirit, typically represented by Arnold of Brescia but increasingly tinged with apocalypticism, and the recrudescence of that fervent desire for the *vita apostolica* and the ideal of poverty which had punctuated the life of the Church since its inception; a new and speculative edge to theological enquiry which resulted in the doubt of Abelard and the scepticism of Occamism; mysticism, with its heterodox tendencies and a spirituality which militated against an organised ecclesiastical regime of worship. The 'crisis of theodicy' which Nelson has described as afflicting western society from around 1000 onwards no doubt played its part⁴¹ (as we shall see, a few polemicists did pinpoint the problem of evil as one of the causes of heresy). The unparalleled growth in personal piety was therefore matched by theological developments which encouraged an individual search for God and dispensed with intermediaries, be they ecclesiastical or intellectual. All of this comprises the milieu of 'religious sentiment' within which western heresy arose.⁴²

As far as the vast majority of orthodox medieval churchmen were concerned, however, it would never have entered their minds that such factors could

⁴¹'Society, Theodicy and the Origins of Medieval Heresy'; cf. the reply by Asad, 'Medieval Heresy: an Anthropological View'.

⁴²Cf. Brooke, 'Heresy and Religious Sentiment'.

have any relevance to the question of the causes of heresy. Whilst it is true that a few polemicists were prepared to admit that the Roman Church's pastoral inadequacies could foster heresy where it occurred, for the most part they looked elsewhere for an explanation for the rise of heresy. Polemicists interpreted Paul's warning - *Oportet et haereses esse* in its Vulgate form (1 Cor. 11: 9)⁴³ - as meaning that there must always be heresies amongst them, in much the same way the Jesus had said that there would always be the poor among them. The immediate causes of heresy in individuals, primarily spiritual pride and ignorance, were well-known. Not all medieval polemicists, however, found it necessary to go further and explain its historical origins, concentrating instead on those erroneous doctrines which established heretics held. In this sense the existence of heresy was taken for granted and no explanations were deemed necessary. Bernard of Clairvaux viewed heresy as one of the 'temptations' to which the Church had been subjected during her history.⁴⁴ The persecutions and the great doctrinal heresies were the previous temptations; in his day the Church was faced with the development of ambition and avarice amongst the clergy and the re-emergence of heresy. The final temptation will be the coming of the Antichrist and the Last Judgement.⁴⁵ There was a sense, then, in which heresy was viewed as almost God-given, part of God's scheme and the

⁴³For the history of the exegesis of this verse during the Patristic period, see Grundmann, 'Oportet'.

⁴⁴Leclercq, 'L'hérésie d'après S. Bernard de Clairvaux', pp. 12-14.

⁴⁵The same view is found in Otto of Freising's *The Two Cities*: 'As we learn from Holy Writ, the City of Christ suffered first a violent persecution at the hands of the city of this world under tyrants and unbelieving kings, secondly a treacherous persecution in the time of the heretics, and thirdly a persecution consisting of pretence in the time of the hypocrites. It is further to suffer its last persecution under Antichrist - a persecution violent, treacherous, hypocritical and the most severe of all.' (transl. Mierow, p. 456). A similar line of thought is apparent in Eberwin of Steinfeld's letter to Bernard of Clairvaux: during its history the Church has been subject to the attacks of the scribes and Pharisees, the arguments of the pagans, the 'subtle deceptions' of the heretics, false Christians and finally the heretics of the last days. (PL 182, 676). On medieval theologians' and chroniclers' differing views of the past see Chenu, 'Theology and the New Awareness of History'; Vaughan, 'The Past in the Middle Ages'.

natural life of the Church. But as the strength and diffusion of heresy increased greater attempts were made to understand the nature of heresy as a prerequisite to destroying it (hence the most theoretical considerations heresy come from inquisitors). As the heresies of the eleventh and the twelfth centuries began to present a new and seemingly appealing face, orthodox contemporaries were forced to reassess their preconceptions which they had inherited from the works of the early Church polemicists about the nature of heresy. Beginning to think about the origins and causes of heresy, which previously had not been particularly relevant to the Church's defence, was part of this process. It was, however, to the lasting detriment of the medieval Church that this process became side-tracked at an early stage, taking polemicists and their inherited assumptions about the nature of heresy into lines of thought which were only minimally based on an accurate analysis of the spiritual crisis with which the medieval Church was faced. As defenders of the Church, polemicists were unlikely publicly to acknowledge any responsibility on their institutions's part, even if they secretly perceived this to be the case. The very people who were charged with disseminating information which could be used in the fight against heresy were therefore inherently predisposed to ignore the true location of the causes of heresy and to fasten on the particular kinds of causes which would not incriminate their own institution. Moreover, polemicists were basing their attack on a fundamentally false premise, which was that something as evil as heresy could not originate from within the true Church. Hence it became a fundamental part of the polemical strategy to attack the person of the heretic as spiritually and morally corrupt, whilst downplaying the significance of their doctrinal error.

As has been discussed above, the pastoral inadequacies of the medieval Church, following the increased spiritual aspirations amongst the laity which the failure of the Gregorian Reform programme aroused, must be counted as one of the causes of heresy. The perceptiveness of, for example, Innocent III in this area, and his far-sighted policies towards religious enthusiasts, has been noted frequently and is well documented.⁴⁶ However only a few polemicists seemed to be aware that some, at least, of the responsibility for heresy lay at the institutional Church's own door. Bernard of Fontcaude wrote that the true cause of the heretics' success was that 'the heretical demons and tyrants have not been thrown out of the sheepfold of Christ, either by the voice of preaching, or by the rod of discipline or severity'.⁴⁷ The majority of the clergy:

labouring under either inexperience or a lack of books, have been made an offence and scandal to the faithful to whom they minister, by not resisting the enemies of the truth. Whence they do not strengthen them in the Catholic faith, nor do they reinvigorate them by the nourishments of the holy scriptures.⁴⁸

Berthold of Regensburg, preaching about the ten means by which the Devil caused people to fall into heresy - means which he compared to the 'ten horns of the dragons of the Apocalypse' - also pointed to the corrupt lifestyle of some 'doctors' and other members of the Church hierarchy, and the effects of this on the laity:

they eat freely, they consort freely with men, they value honours, they are impatient, and some say certain things which

⁴⁶For this viewpoint on Innocent, see especially Bolton, 'Tradition and Temerity', pp. 79-91; 'Innocent III's Treatment of the Humiliati'.

⁴⁷'Justa quidem est causa majoris mali praescripti, dejici a caulis ovium Christi lupos rapaces, id est daemones haereticos et tyrannos, nec voce praedicationis, nec baculo disciplinae seu severitatis'. *Adversus Waldensium sectam*, Prologus: v (PL 204, 795).

⁴⁸'Haec autem omnia fecimus maxime ad instruendos, vel commonendos quosdam clericos, qui vel imperitia, vel librorum inopia laborantes, hostibus veritatis non resistendo, facti sunt in offensionem et scandalum fidelibus, quibus praesunt. Eos namque in fide Catholica non roborant, nec alimentis sanctarum Scripturarum reficiunt'. *Adversus Waldensium sectam*, Prologus: v (PL 204, 795).

you know, and some do not. And more! And so you believe both true and false evil about the doctors.⁴⁹

Two out of the seven causes of heresy listed by the Anonymous of Passau are laid at the door of the Church hierarchy:

The fifth cause is the insufficient learning of some, who sometimes teach what is frivolous and false. Therefore whatever a doctor of the church teaches that he cannot prove through the text of the New Testament, this they hold to be a complete fable...

The sixth cause is the irreverence which certain ministers show to the sacraments of the church.⁵⁰

In pointing to the misconduct and poor education of some ministers as a cause of heresy, the Anonymous acknowledged the desire of many of the laity for reform on the one hand, and the institutional Church's failure to fulfil that desire on the other. The Church should not ignore its own contribution to the spread of heresy: 'The negligence of the doctors of the faithful', writes the Anonymous, 'should shame those who are not as zealous for the truth of the Catholic faith as the perfidious Leonists are for the error of infidelity'.⁵¹ Eckbert of Schönau made a similar point, saying that it was shameful that educated members of the Church hierarchy found themselves dumb and speechless before the fluent and skillful arguments of the heretics.⁵² The Anonymous does not, however, blame the Church hierarchy exclusively, but is careful to point out that the laity are equally culpable:

⁴⁹'tertium est mala vita doctorum vel aliorum fidelium. hoc proponunt ita: libenter comedunt, vadunt libenter ad homines, diligunt honores, sunt impatientes et dicunt quedam que scitis, quedam que non. et plura! et ita utrumque creditis, et verum malum de doctoribus et falsum'. Sermon 24 (Schönbach, p. 19).

⁵⁰'Quinta causa est insufficiencia doctrine quorundam, qui predicant quandoque frivola vel falsa. Unde quidquid ecclesie doctor docet, quod per textum novi testamenti non probat, hoc pro fabulis totum habent... Sexta causa est irreverencia, quam exhibent quidam ministri ecclesie sacramentis'. *De causis heresum* (Patschovsky & Selge, p. 72).

⁵¹'Erubescat negligencia fidelium doctorum, qui non sic zelant catholice fidei veritatem, sicut perfidi Leoniste zelant infidelitatis errorem'. *De causis heresum* (Patschovsky & Selge, p. 71).

⁵²*Sermones*, I (Harrison, vol. I, p. 400).

The fourth cause is the scandal of the bad example of some people. Therefore, when they see someone living badly, they say: the apostles did not live thus, nor do we, who are imitators of the apostles.⁵³

Another polemicist puts forward what appears to be a plausible explanation for the appearance of heresy in the west. The inquisitor Anselm of Alessandria was apparently aware of some of the causes of heresy and the processes by which it could spread. The first section of his *Tractatus de hereticis* - 'Principium et origo heresum quomodo sunt' - carefully details the development of Catharism from its beginnings with the arch-heresiarch Mani. Anselm writes that Catharism was transmitted by Greek traders from Bulgaria to Constantinople, from where Slav traders took it to Bosnia, and Frankish Crusaders took it back to France. He therefore attributed the spread of the heresy from its initial foothold in Persia to two principal factors: trading activity and the Crusades. Primarily responsible, in his view, is trade between east and west. Moore comments in a general way that 'it was a surer instinct which prompted him to identify trade as the medium of propagation in two out of his three cases', but denies that trade was uniquely or even particularly responsible for the spread of heresy.⁵⁴ If trade was responsible for the initial spread of dualism in eastern Europe, the Crusades were, according to Anselm, responsible for importing the 'bulgar' heresy into France and from there to neighbouring areas:

Afterwards the Franks came to Constantinople in order to subjugate the land and discovered that sect, and having increased in number, they created a bishop who was called the bishop of the Latins... After that the Franks, who had come to

⁵³'Quarta causa est scandalum de malo exemplo quorundam. Unde, cum male vivere vident quosdam, dicunt: Sic apostoli non vixerunt nec nos, qui sumus imitatores apostolorum'. *De causis heresum* (Patschovsky & Selge, p. 71).

⁵⁴Moore, *Origins of European Dissent*, pp. 173-74.

Constantinople, returned to their own country and preached, and increasing in number they created a bishop of France.⁵⁵

This is probably a reference to the Second Crusade of 1147.⁵⁶ The connection which Anselm makes between the Crusades and the emergence of heresy is unusual in the polemical literature, and the degree to which the Crusades can really be regarded as a cause of heresy is debatable. Thouzellier has argued, partly on the basis of Anselm's evidence, that there was indeed a link between the two,⁵⁷ but her argument has been heavily criticised.⁵⁸ This was, and has remained, a minority position; not the least of its problems being that it fails to answer the further and much more interesting question of why, having been transported by returning Crusaders, Catharism took root at all in western Europe. Few modern scholars would agree that the Crusades were in reality responsible for the transmission of dualism into western Europe. Anselm seems to have hit on one of the genuine causes of heresy, but in the light of modern scholarship his apparent perceptiveness is shown to be false.

This is the nearest that any of the polemicists come to an accurate analysis of the causes of heresy in the west. Even these two approaches - pinning the responsibility for heresy on the institutional Church, or blaming the trading and fighting activities of various groups - do not really answer the question. The first approach, although having much to commend it, only points to a

⁵⁵'Postea francigene iverunt Constantinopolim ut subiugarent terram et invenerunt istam sectam, et multiplicati fecerunt episcopum, qui dicitur episcopus latinorum... Postea francigene, qui iverant Constantinopolim, redierunt ad propria et predicaverunt, et multiplicati consistuerunt episcopum Francie'. *Tractatus de hereticis*, I (Dondaine, 'La hiérarchie II', p. 308).

⁵⁶According to Dondaine, 'La hiérarchie II', p. 240, n. 8; Thouzellier, 'Tradition et résurgence', p. 12.

⁵⁷Thouzellier, 'Hérésie et croisade au XII^e siècle', *RHE* 49 (1954), pp. 855-72. She later revised some of her opinions in a re-edited form of this article in 'Hérésie et croisade au XII^e siècle', *Hérésie et hérétiques*, pp. 17-37.

⁵⁸See Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, p. 39, n. 13; Russell, 'Interpretations', p. 49.

contributory negligence on the part of the medieval Church. The inadequate pastoral skills of its hierarchy did not cause individuals to become heretical, rather they fostered the conditions in which people took to dissent. Similarly Anselm's approach may perhaps have contained a grain of truth, but puts forward an explanation for the spread of heresy, rather than its initial causes. For the most part polemicists' thinking about the causes of heresy was not even this perceptive. Out of Berthold of Regensburg's list of ten causes of heresy, only one - the unworthy lifestyle of many churchmen - is clearly recognisable as one of the causes of heresy as perceived by historians today. The deceptively 'sweet' teachings and the *simulatio sanctitatis* of heretics appear in Berthold's sermons as actual causes (the first and second), rather than as mere characteristics, of heresy.⁵⁹ The *simulatio sanctitatis* reappears as his seventh cause; in other words the activities of those treacherous people who, posing as worthy and wise members of the community, greatly disturb the faithful.⁶⁰ Such people also cause heresy through doing false signs and wonders, or distorting natural events so that they appear miraculous (the fifth cause) - they can, for example, apparently turn water into wine and predict the future. More ominously, they can control where rain falls and speak in many different tongues. Again, none of these 'causes' really get at the root of the problem, although Berthold himself has no doubt that such activities are the direct result of diabolical entanglement.⁶¹

Certain groups of people were believed to be more prone to heresy than others; there almost being a feeling that in certain circles heresy was an occupational liability. For instance, heresy was seen as a virtually inevitable

⁵⁹Sermon 24 (Schönbach, pp. 18-19).

⁶⁰Sermon 24 (Schönbach, p. 21).

⁶¹Sermon 24 (Schönbach, pp. 19-21).

product of some intellectual groups, such as the philosophers and in particular dialecticians. Some social groups, such as textile workers, were also regarded as extremely suspect - Eckbert of Schönau, for example, explained that in France the Cathars were called Tisserands because of their connection with weaving.⁶² Whether it was thought that mere membership of a particular social, economic or intellectual group actually caused heresy, or whether the activities which those groups engaged in were the cause of heresy is another matter. Whilst it is comparatively easy to see how dialectics, for instance, could lead to heresy, it is not so easy to see how weaving could do so! Whatever the answer to that question, many of the more rigorist polemicists were agreed that in practice membership of such groups was more or less bound to cause heresy.

However, it was not only certain social groups which were viewed as being prone to heresy. There also existed a strong belief that certain individuals were psychologically disposed towards heresy. Women were considered as particularly culpable in this regard, and to be more susceptible to the heretics' manipulative recruiting tactics than were men, as for example in Pseudo-David of Augsburg's treatise.⁶³ Bernard of Fontcaude headed his list of groups of people who were especially vulnerable to the heretics' seduction with women, who in turn seduced their men-folk into heresy, just as Eve had seduced Adam into committing the first sin.⁶⁴ Lerner argues (with reference to the the Free Spirits) that there were genuine sociological reasons why women should have been more susceptible to the attractions of the *vita*

⁶²*Sermones*, I (Harrison, vol. I, p. 8). See Runciman, *The Medieval Manichee*, p. 169, for the origins of this name.

⁶³*De inquisitione hereticorum*, 6 (Preger, p. 209).

⁶⁴*Adversus Waldensium sectam*, VII: ii (PL 204, 821). On the traditional association of women with evil see Mora, 'Reification of Evil', pp. 39-42.

apostolica.⁶⁵ In the eyes of contemporaries this would be tantamount to being susceptible to heresy. He may well be correct in his assumptions, but it is quite clear that polemicists believed women to be particularly susceptible to heresy because they were particularly silly and ignorant. It is therefore by virtue of their block membership of the *idiotae* and *rustici* that they are so prone to heresy. Other susceptible types on Bernard's list include liars and the ignorant, the *simplices* and *imperitos*. Berthold of Regensburg regarded the gullibility and curiosity of the laity as much a cause of heresy as anything else (not forgetting that *curiositas* was also a vice of those philosophers who fell into heresy). Some, more histrionic, characters simply enjoyed the excitement, and enjoyed airing controversial opinions and stirring up trouble. Other personalities, perhaps, burned with the desire for martyrdom.⁶⁶ Some minds tended to dwell on more existential questions. The Anonymous of Passau attributed Valdes' conversion to the apostolic life to a confrontation with the sudden death of a friend and hence his own mortality.⁶⁷ Berthold of Regensburg saw the problem of evil as one of the principal causes of heresy, because 'Man thinks, how can it be that God allows everyone to perish?'⁶⁸ Anselm of Alessandria pinned the inception of Manicheism to the same problem:

It ought to be known that in Persia there was a certain person who was called Mani, who first said to himself: If God exists, where does evil come from; and if God does not exist, where does good come from? From this he posited two principles.⁶⁹

⁶⁵*Heresy of the Free Spirit*, p. 230.

⁶⁶Berthold of Regensburg, Sermon 24: 'octavum [cornu]: martyrium'. (Schönbach, p. 20).

⁶⁷*Die Anfänge der Waldenser* (Patschovsky & Selge, p. 19).

⁶⁸'sextum cornu, quia multitudo. cogitat homo, quomodo potest esse, quod Deus permittit omnes perire?' Sermon 24 (Schönbach, p. 20).

⁶⁹Notandum quod in Persia fuit quidam qui vocabatur manes, qui ait primo intra se: Si deus est, unde sunt mala; et si deus non est, unde bona? Ex hoc posuit duo principia'. *Tractatus de hereticis*, I (Dondaine, 'La hiérarchie II', p. 308).

For both these polemicists, dualism provided an all too attractive and simple answer to the perennial problem of evil. In this they may well have been nearer the mark than most of their colleagues.⁷⁰

Much more problematic is Berthold of Regensburg's fourth cause of heresy (which also forms his ninth cause):

The fourth cause is the fear of losing the truth (*res*), or of its actual loss. For rather than lose the truth, they cling to error - many are overcome through this.⁷¹

Segl translates *res* as 'possessions', and so interprets this statement as suggesting that many people were driven into heresy through economic motives; arguing that this piece of evidence has largely been ignored by those areas of modern research which emphasise the economic causes of heretical movements.⁷² Although the exact meaning of the Latin text is not clear, Segl's interpretation makes very little sense in the face of the undeniable fact that the majority of the popular heretical movements aspired to a high degree of asceticism. Indeed many heretics, far from being worried about falling into poverty, desired nothing other than to follow the *vita apostolica* to the letter. Moreover, the antithesis of *res* and *errori* indicates that *res* should be taken here in the opposite sense to *errori*: as 'the truth'. Berthold qualifies his statement of cause as follows:

- briefly: whoever values something excessively, will be pierced through. For when will it give peace and honour to the merchants, if they carry gold on their heads? Whoever then values many truths, will fall away [from the truth], because he accepts as that which he loves that which he valued. For he will have hidden riches and can also make false riches through alchemy or can deceive the eyes.⁷³

⁷⁰Cf. Nelson, 'Society, Theodicy and the Origins of Heresy'.

⁷¹'quantum cornu est timor amittendi res, vel amissio. quia potius quam amittant res, potius adherent errori. - multi per hoc sunt victi'. Sermon 24 (Schönbach, p. 19).

⁷²Segl, *Ketzer in Österreich*, p. 236.

⁷³- breviter: quicumque aliquid diligit injuste, perforabitur. nam quando dabit mercatoribus pacem et honorem, si portarent aurum in capite? quicumque tunc plures res diligit, cadet,

What Berthold seems to be saying, in a somewhat obscure fashion, is that some people snatch at the chance of security and assurance in the form of deceptively simple answers (such as the dualist answer to the problem of evil), and in so doing fall away from the real truth which is often much harder to grasp.

Although most of these psychological factors do not pinpoint the root causes of heresy, it is in their discussion of such matters that polemicists come closest to explaining these causes. Their focus on the heretic as a particular kind of person, however, prevented them from drawing out the significance of these factors. In their eyes there was much more to the causes of heresy than mere psychological disposition. The immediate cause of heresy in individuals was pride, the most pervasive of the carnal fruits. It was axiomatic during this period that *omnis hereticus superbus est*.⁷⁴ *Superbia* was the *radix omnium haereseos et apostasiae*;⁷⁵ the origin of all fruits of the flesh. Being the *radix vitiorum*, *superbia* leads to other more particular sins. Hugh of St. Victor lists them as follows: *luxuria, ventris ingluvies, avaritia, tristitia, ira, invidia, vana gloria*.⁷⁶ Each of these branches into further 'carnal fruits'. Vainglory, for instance, an aspect of *superbia* which was the heretics' most besetting sin, is divided by Hugh of St. Victor into *hypocrisis, inobedientia, jactantia, novitatum praesumptio, arrogantia, loquacitas, pertinacia*.⁷⁷ Stephen of Bourbon outlines the same system of thought. The sections in his *De septem viciis et eorum speciebus*, recording a similar list of vices, are entitled: *De*

quia accipit ad hoc, quod diligit. Nam habebit occultas divitias et etiam potest facere falsas per alchimiam vel illudere oculos'. Sermon 23 (Schönbach, p. 19).

⁷⁴In the Middle Ages this saying was attributed to Augustine. See Grundmann, 'Der Typus', p. 316 & n. 7.

⁷⁵According to Frederick I's decree about the heretic Tanchelm, in Fearn, *Ketzer und Ketzerbekämpfung*, p. 16.

⁷⁶*De fructibus carnis et spiritus*, III (PL 176, 999).

⁷⁷*De fructibus carnis et spiritus*, IV (PL 176, 999).

superbia, *De vana gloria*, *De ypocrisi*, *De inobediencia*, *De contumacia*, *De irreverencia*, *De presumpcione*, each again sub-dividing.⁷⁸ The basis of this view was found in the Bible. In the Old Testament it was read that 'the beginning of man's pride is to depart from the Lord; his heart has forsaken his Maker. For the beginning of pride is sin, and the man who clings to it pours out abominations' (Ecclesiasticus 10: 12-13). All of the seven vices were characteristics of heresy. As Berthold of Regensburg pointed out, heresy was a despicable faith, which was based on lying, perjury, and hypocrisy;⁷⁹ whilst Ebrard of Béthune said that 'they endlessly glory in works, they display the appearance of piety, their heart is vain'.⁸⁰

Nearly all polemical writings refer to these traits, but it is *superbia* and its sub-species which are consistently singled out not just as characteristics of heresy but as the primary causes of heresy. Hugh of Amiens wrote that heretics 'embraced' pride. Their false sense of judgement 'advances by pride, and attacks through haughtiness'.⁸¹ Other writers constantly refer to the heretics as *superbie vento inflati*; proud, boastful and inflated with a sense of their own worth.⁸² However, *superbia* was not merely regarded as the cause of heresy in a technical sense, but was thought to be the direct cause of the appearance of the popular heresies. According to the inquisitor's treatise of Pseudo-David of Augsburg, *superbia* was the impetus behind the original formation of the Waldensians:

There were some *simplices laici* in Lyons, who being inflamed by a certain spirit, and presuming to put themselves above

⁷⁸*De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7 (Lecoy de la Marche, pp. 221-74).

⁷⁹'est hoc pulchra et vera fides, que super mendacia est fundata et super perjuriam (sic) ? et super ypocrisim? hec fides sit abhominabilis omni sapienti'. Sermon 28 (Schönbach, p. 32).

⁸⁰'in operibus sine fine gloriantur, pietatis praetendunt speciem, cor eorum vanum est'. *Liber antihaeresis*, Prologus (MBVP² 24, 1526).

⁸¹*De ecclesia*, IX (PL 192, 1263-264).

⁸²E. g. Berthold of Regensburg, Sermon 26 (Schönbach p. 27)

others, boasted that they lived entirely according to evangelical teaching and to follow it perfectly to the letter... Thus the proud presumption of their dressed-up sanctity and of their superiority by virtue of this condition led to the blindness of heretical depravity, because evangelical perfection teaches that they should humbly obey the doctors and rectors of the Church, rather than separate themselves from Catholic unity through singular inflammation.⁸³

The Waldensians' pride and presumption was therefore the direct cause of their first and most serious error: their contempt for ecclesiastical power. *Praesumptio*, a form of pride, was also the cause of another widespread error, the usurpation of the preaching office. This point was made by Pseudo-David of Augsburg; having been so fortunate as to obtain confirmation of their way of life from Innocent III, the Waldensians then:

arrogantly usurped the office of preaching to themselves, saying that Christ had ordered his disciples to preach the gospel, and because they presumed to interpret the words of the gospel in their own way, seeing that no others observed the gospel to the letter, which they boasted that they wished to do, they said that they alone were the true imitators of Christ.⁸⁴

Presumption and pride were implicit in the claim, so often cited and attacked by polemicists, to be the only true followers of the gospel. Bernard Gui maintained that 'through the presumptuous usurpation of the office of preaching, they became teachers of error'.⁸⁵ Likewise Stephen of Bourbon, who showed how one form of pride led inevitably to another:

Therefore, these people, namely Valdes and his companions, first fell into disobedience through presumption and

⁸³'Apud Lugdunum fuerunt quidam simplices layci, qui quodam spiritu inflammati et super ceteros de se presumentes iactabant, se omnino vivere secundum ewangelii doctrinam et illam ad literam perfecte servare... Sic superba presumcio palliate sanctitatis et affectate singularitatis cecitatem induxit heretice pravitatis, cum ewangelica perfectio magis doceat humiliter obedire doctoribus et rectoribus ecclesie quam per tumorem singularitatis se scindere a katholica unitate'. *De inquisitione hereticorum*, 4 (Preger, pp. 205-06).

⁸⁴'eciam officium predicationis sibi iactanter assumere, dicentes Christum precepisse sui discipulis ewangelium praedicare, et quia sensu proprio verba ewangelii interpretari presumpserunt, videntes nullos alios ewangelium iuxta literam servare, quod se facere velle iactaverunt, se solos Christi veros imitatores esse dixerunt'. *De inquisitione hereticorum*, 4 (Preger, p. 206).

⁸⁵'Sic itaque, ex presumptuosa usurpatione officii predicandi, facti sunt magistri erroris'. *Practica inquisitionis*, II: i (Mollat, vol. I, p. 36).

usurpation of the apostolic office, then into contumacy, then into sentence of excommunication.⁸⁶

Superbia was the basis, in fact, of all heretical doctrines, which like the heretics themselves were regarded as essentially homogeneous. Ebrard of Béthune reproached the *Xabatenses* (an unidentified group of heretics) with their *quatuor superbiae genera*, which was the direct cause of four kinds of errors:

But the tumour of pride is distributed among you in four ways. For first, a man becomes superior when he thinks he has what he does not have. Second, when he does not believe that what he has, he received from God, but believes that he has it through his own power. Third, when he believes that what he has, he received from God, but by the requirements of his own merits. Fourth, when having despised others, he thinks that he has those things which others could not have.⁸⁷

As Grundmann has pointed out, it is questionable whether *superbia* can truly be regarded as a cause of heresy, although it could be viewed as a contributory cause or predisposing factor. It does not, he argues, play a part in the true psychological motives of the Waldensians, for example.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, it was the cornerstone of the medieval concept of heresy, precisely because it fitted so well with both the traditional etymological definition of heresy as the exercise of personal choice, and the increasing emphasis on contumacy in the face of correction from the Church as the defining characteristic of heresy. The polemicists' intense focus on the nature of the individual heretic meant that they fastened on *superbia* as the primary

⁸⁶'Hi ergo, Valdensis videlicet et sui, primo ex presumptione et officii apostolici usurpacione ceciderunt in inobedienciam, deinde in contumaciam, deinde in excommunicacionis sentenciam'. *De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 342 (Lecoy de la Marche, p. 292).

⁸⁷'Quatuor quippe modis tumor superbiae in vobis dividitur. Primum enim superbit homo, cum se putat habere, quod non habet. Secundo, cum quod habet, a Deo accepisse non credit, sed propria virtute habere. Tertio, cum quod habet, a Deo accepisse credit, sed propriis meritis exigentibus. Quarto, cum aliis despectis, ea se habere putat, quae alii habere non possunt'. *Liber antihaeresis*, XXV (MBVP² 24, 1573).

⁸⁸Grundmann, 'Der Typus', p. 317.

cause of heresy. It was *superbia* which caused the heretics to choose their own beliefs in preference to the teachings of the Church. It was *hypocrisis* and *mendacium*, sub-species of *superbia*, which were responsible for the essential characteristic of the medieval heretic: the *species pietatis*. It was *praesumptio* which led them into unauthorised preaching, one of the greatest points of dispute between orthodox and heterodox. The role of *superbia* and its sub-species is the basis of all their explanations of the causes of heresy in individuals. It is also implicit in all the polemical accounts of the origins of particular heretical groups.

As the previous chapter pointed out, familiarity with the Scriptures and apparent literacy was one of the principal hallmarks of heresy. However, these factors were also regarded as being in themselves a cause of heresy. The road to hell is paved with good intentions, and studying the Scriptures without proper clerical supervision, although the motive might be unimpeachable, was one of the quickest routes into heresy. The mere activity of study could indirectly lead to heresy; the Anonymous of Passau reported that the Waldensians spent so much time teaching and learning that they had very little time left to pray or to go to church.⁸⁹ Studying translations from the Latin was thought to be particularly dangerous. The Anonymous wrote that 'the third cause [of heresy] is that they have translated the New and Old Testaments into the vernacular, and so they teach and discuss'; and because they are ignorant lay-people (*layci ydiote*) they make ridiculous mistakes in their translations, completely distorting the original texts.⁹⁰ Similarly, Bernard Gui saw the origin of Valdes' heresy in the fact that:

⁸⁹*De causis heresum* (Patschovsky & Selge, p. 70).

⁹⁰'Tercia causa est, quia novum testamentum et vetus vulgariter transtulerunt et sic docent et discunt'. *De causis heresum* (Patschovsky & Selge, p. 71).

he had the gospels and certain other books of the Bible written for himself in the common gallic tongue and also certain authorities from Saints Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose, Gregory, arranged by title, which he and his followers called sentences, reading them often among themselves and understanding exceedingly little, being inflated with their own worth, although they were scarcely literate...⁹¹

He saw the same pattern at work in the origins of the Beguins. They had taken their 'pestilential errors and opinions' from Peter John Olivi's commentary on the Apocalypse, which they had in Latin and translated into the common tongue. They also possessed writings on poverty, mendicancy and dispensations written by other Beguins. All of these 'they had, translated into the vernacular, and they read them and believed them and used them as if they were authentic scriptures'.⁹² Stephen of Bourbon similarly reported that Valdes had commissioned two priests to write down translations of the Scriptures and other passages from the Fathers. It was these writings, which he 'read often and learned off by heart', that inspired in him a determination to embark on a life of apostolic poverty.⁹³

Here again the notion of *superbia* as a cause of heresy is implicit. The essential point was that even if a person did not actually fall into error through knowledge of the Scriptures, it was arrogant and presumptuous for anyone to think that they could make use of the Scriptures or other authorities without the mediation of the institutional Church between themselves and the text. In practice, reception of a text and the rejection of the Church's mediating interpretation always led to error and to heresy. Moneta of Cremona, for

⁹¹'Et cum fecisset conscribi sibi evangelia et aliquos alios libros de Biblia in vulgari gallico ac etiam aliquas auctoritates sanctorum Augustini, Jeronimi, Ambrosii, Gregorii ordinatas per titulos, quas ipse et sequaces sententias appellaverunt, ea sepius secum legentes et minus sane intelligentes, sensu suo inflati, cum essent modicum litterati...' *Practica inquisitionis*, II: i, (Mollat, vol. I, p. 34).

⁹²'et que omnia habent in vulgari transposita, et ea legunt et eis credunt et intendunt tanquam scripturis autenticis'. *Practica inquisitionis*, IV: ii (Mollat, vol. I, p. 110).

⁹³*De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 343 (Lecoy de la Marche, p. 294).

instance, showed how various specific heretical opinions were the result of the misinterpretation of scriptural verses which the heretics had either read or heard.⁹⁴ The parallel traditions concerning the origins of the Franciscans and the Waldensians also bear this out. Both were commonly reported to have heard the preaching of the same verse of Scripture: 'If you would be perfect go and sell all that you have and give your money to the poor'. The reaction of Valdes was to do just that, but in rejecting the methods which the institutional Church had developed for the fulfilment of this commission, he chose to put his own interpretation of the verse above that of the Church. Worse, he was even reported to have consulted some doctors of theology, who were themselves suspected of being prone to error.⁹⁵ Francis, on the other hand, chose to fulfil the commission under the supervision of the Church hierarchy. A further effect of such 'literacy' (whether active or passive) was that it nearly always seemed to result in the individual in question launching into an unauthorised preaching campaign. The reception of texts could therefore cause heresy in two ways: one, by fostering a presumptuous, and usually misguided, confidence in personal abilities, and two, by stimulating participation in an activity which the medieval Church was increasingly inclined to regard as its exclusive province and any incursions of which offered strong evidence of heresy.

One question which must be considered, although not strictly relevant to the popular heresies with which we are dealing, is the question of philosophy as a cause of heresy. The tradition of linking philosophy and heresy was an ancient one, and, as Congar has noted, there had always been a certain

⁹⁴*Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*, I: iv, i (Ricchini, pp. 44-53).

⁹⁵Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, p. 63.

amount of contempt on principle for 'philosophers'.⁹⁶ Tertullian saw philosophy as the *patriarchae haereticorum* and Hippolytus agreed, showing in his *Philosophoumena* how each sect derived its ideas from an ancient philosopher.⁹⁷ Similar opinions were held by Ireneus, Epiphanius, Jerome and Isidore.⁹⁸ This tradition continued into the Middle Ages, raising a number of important questions. If philosophy really was a cause of heresy, what was the nature of this relationship? Were the ancient philosophical systems really the ancestor of all the medieval heresies? Did it, in other words, transmit what were originally pagan 'heresies' to medieval Christian thought? What is the evidence to suggest any of the medieval heresies were based on philosophical systems or categories? Did the practice of philosophy cause heresy because it was itself intrinsically heretical, or was it the methodology of philosophy which caused heresy?

Tertullian's view of philosophy as the father of heresies continued into the Middle Ages, as Verbeke points out, citing Walter of St. Victor and Peter Damian as examples. Walter of St. Victor's *Contra quatuor labyrinthos Franciae* (1177/8) regarded philosophers and dialecticians as the progenitors of all heretics past and present. He criticises the most important representatives of medieval philosophy and theology: Peter Abelard, Peter Lombard, Peter of Poitiers and Gilbert of Porrée. It is worth noting that what Walter calls an Aristotelian spirit causes heresy not by directly transmitting erroneous doctrines into the theologian's minds, but by encouraging them to treat sacred mysteries with 'scholastic levity'.⁹⁹ Peter Damian was talking about the education of monks, but if philosophy was too dangerous for monks to

⁹⁶Congar, *L'Eglise une, sainte catholique et apostolique*, p. 99. For what follows I have relied on Verbeke, 'Philosophy and Heresy'.

⁹⁷Verbeke, 'Philosophy and Heresy' p. 172.

⁹⁸*L'Eglise une, sainte catholique et apostolique*, p. 99.

⁹⁹Verbeke, 'Philosophy and Heresy', pp. 173-74.

handle, how much more so for the *simplices laici*? His view was that philosophy was an invention of the Devil, and that the first professor of grammar was the Devil who had taught Adam to decline *deus* in the plural (Gen. 3: 5),¹⁰⁰ indicating once again the role of the Devil in the ultimate origins of heresy. It had been Tertullian's opinion that heresies were often caused by introducing Greek philosophical categories in order to explain the content of faith and this was also transmitted into medieval thought.

It would seem that, technically at least, philosophy was not regarded as intrinsically heretical; rather it could, if misused, result in heresy - the view for instance of Lanfranc in his controversy with Berengar of Tours.¹⁰¹ It was primarily through *superbia* that philosophy was able to cause heresy. Pride led philosophers to apply their own intellectual capabilities to theological questions, rather than accepting revealed truths and the teaching of the Church Fathers - Abelard always being cited as the supreme example of pride leading to heresy. To more rigorous minds, however, the application of philosophical categories to matters of faith so often resulted in error that in practice many regarded such methodologies as themselves being the cause of heresy. Pride and excessive self-confidence in intellectual categories were the basis of the complaint of Bernard of Clairvaux and William of St. Thierry against Abelard, William of Conches and Arnold of Brescia.¹⁰²

In reality, however, it is questionable just how many of the medieval heresies were derived from a philosophical system. It certainly seems reasonably clear that Abelard's heresies, for instance, sprang from his application of

¹⁰⁰ Verbeke, 'Philosophy and Heresy', p. 174.

¹⁰¹ Verbeke, 'Philosophy and Heresy', pp. 175-76.

¹⁰² Verbeke, 'Philosophy and Heresy', p. 178.

dialectics to theology, and a similar case could be argued for other so-called 'intellectual' heresies - Eriugena and Amalric of Bène, for example.¹⁰³ It is, however, very much more difficult to see any kind of philosophical basis for the more 'popular' heresies. The primary candidate for a popular heresy with a philosophical system at its base would, one supposes, be Catharism, but Verbeke points out that even quite theoretical works, such as Durand of Huesca's *Contra Manicheos* and the Cathar John of Lugio's *De duobus principiis* show that the doctrine of the two principles had very little basis in philosophical doctrines. He concludes that 'philosophy' was not the ancestor of the Cathars and the Waldensians; although acknowledging the disputes over the question of Gnostic origins, he argues that recent research stresses the differences between Greek philosophy and Gnostic dualism. If Gnosticism did not spring from Greek philosophy, then the Cathar and Waldensian movements most certainly did not.¹⁰⁴

There is, however, little evidence to suggest that polemicists were greatly concerned with any of these questions - perhaps because the popular heresies with which they were dealing had only minimal, if any, philosophical content, perhaps because they were concentrating their attention on the practical problem of arming their readers for the fight against those heresies. Tertullian's formula is repeated in Honorius Augustodunensis' catalogues of heretics: 'The philosophers were the fathers of the heretics, amongst whom there were many heresies'.¹⁰⁵ This designation of philosophers as the *patriarchae haereticorum* appears at the head of Honorius' catalogue which is derived from Isidore of Seville's list of

¹⁰³ Verbeke, 'Philosophy and Heresy', pp. 188-93.

¹⁰⁴ Verbeke, 'Philosophy and Heresy', pp. 179-93.

¹⁰⁵ 'Philosophi erant patriarchae haereticorum, inter quos plures fuerunt haereses'. *Liber de haeresibus* (PL 172, 235).

pagan philosophies. It does not appear in Isidore's catalogue, but appears to have been interpolated by Honorius; in addition, the title has been changed from *De philosophis gentium* to *De haereticis paganorum*. It is interesting to note in passing that this list appears separately from the list of Christian heretics. As a rule medieval polemicists do not include the philosophical groups which were traditionally listed in Isidore's *Etymologiae* in their own catalogues of heresy. The only exception to this is Ebrard of Béthune's catalogue of Christian heretics, which includes the *Mathematici*, the *Epicuræi* and the *Pythagoræi*.¹⁰⁶ A separate tradition (contained in Durand of Huesca's *Liber antihaeresis* and *Contra Manichæos*,¹⁰⁷ Moneta of Cremona's *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*¹⁰⁸ and some manuscript versions of Benedict of Alignan's *Tractatus fidei*¹⁰⁹) traces the spiritual ancestry of the Cathars back to Pythagoras. Benedict's treatise also contains a section on the errors of Plato concerning the soul (errors which the Cathars were popularly supposed to hold).¹¹⁰ An thirteenth-century antiheretical treatise, attributed to Peter Martyr, pointed out that one group of Predestinarians appeared to have derived their errors 'most of all from the words of Aristotle, as will be made clear by proofs below'.¹¹¹ All of these, however, have little bearing on the issue - avidly discussed by many of their contemporaries - of the practice of applying philosophical methodology to interpretation of the Christian faith. Here it is more a case of polemicists pointing out in passing the reappearance of ancient philosophical 'errors' when they could be identified in the medieval heresies.

¹⁰⁶ *Liber antihaeresis*, XXV (MBVP² 24, 1575).

¹⁰⁷ *Liber antiheresis*, I: De statu ecclesie (Selge, vol. II, p. 96); *Contra Manicheos*, 14 (Thouzellier, *Une somme*, pp. 236-38).

¹⁰⁸ *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*, V: ii, ii (Ricchini, p. 411).

¹⁰⁹ CLM 7454. See Wakefield, 'Notes on Some Antiheretical Writings', p. 316 & n. 111.

¹¹⁰ *Tractatus fidei*, I (CLM 7454, f. 172^v).

¹¹¹ 'Quem errorem videntur traxisse ex dictis Aristotelis maxime, prout inferius in suis allegationibus patebit'. *Contra hereticos*, 23 (Käppeli, p. 331).

To sum up, then, we have seen that the theory of an eastern descent for western medieval heresy is inadequate as an explanation for the emergence of heresy in the west. This phenomenon is much more satisfactorily explained by reference to indigenous ecclesiastical, spiritual, social and economic factors (although still leaving open the possibility of eastern influence and infiltration at various points in time). As we saw in the first chapter, the attitude of the institutional Church towards lay spirituality was crucial for the defining and 'creating' of heresy. These arguments would not, however, have found favour with medieval polemicists. What is striking about all of the supposed causes which they put forward is that they attribute heresy to forces outside the Roman Church, or at least to factors which are outside that Church's control. Anselm of Alessandria attributed heresy to contamination from the east. Familiarity with scriptural texts or oral scriptural traditions caused heresy only when the institutional Church lost its control over the reception of those texts, and its interpretation of the *auctoritates* was rejected. Philosophical categories derived ultimately from pagan origins. The root cause of heresy, *superbia*, was one of the fruits of the flesh, originating at the Devil's instigation. In none of these cases could the responsibility for heresy be put on the Roman Church. In essence, none of the medieval polemicists, with a few honourable exceptions, were able or willing to acknowledge the real causes of heresy. Some of the 'causes' which they put forward appear to be plausible enough explanations for the origins of heresy, but in reality were misdirected. In their minds, all 'causes' rested on the concept of *superbia*. Pride and presumption no doubt played their part in fomenting heresy, as did the problem of evil; but these factors have existed in all places and at all times and so cannot in themselves be accounted as causes of heresy. The connection between the Crusades and the emergence of

heresy has not been accepted by modern scholarship, and in any case is only supported by one reference in Anselm of Alessandria's *Tractatus de hereticis*. Questions about the role of literacy and philosophy in heresy are complex, but again, even if there was a causal link, familiarity with texts and philosophical activity alone could not lead to heresy. There were after all plenty of orthodox *litterati* and philosophers. The true causes of heresy, as we saw in the first section of this chapter, must be sought elsewhere, or in a combination of these and other factors.

Nevertheless, given that these factors were not the true causes of heresy, polemicists and others were firmly convinced that they they were, and that they fully understood the origins of heresy. One problem was that they failed to distinguish clearly enough between the initial causes of heresy and the reasons for the successful spread of heresy. Where any perceptiveness is shown it is usually with regard to what caused heresy to spread, rather than what initially caused it. The real problem, however, was that it was very difficult to identify the real causes of heresy without some reference to the responsibility of the institutional Church. Ecclesiological developments meant that the Church itself had, to a certain extent, shifted the boundaries between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, forcing people who would perhaps previously have been orthodox into a more heterodox position. A further problem was the fact that medieval heresies were consistently viewed through Patristic eyes and measured against the great doctrinal heresies which had dominated the early Church. In addition, certain aspects of the medieval concept of heresy clouded their understanding of the origins of heresy. Their insistence on the *species pietatis* and consequently that acts of particular devotion and piety should be regarded suspiciously, and the way in which the concept of heresy focused especially on 'the heretic' as a

particular kind of person, added to the confusion. All of these factors made a significant contribution to the medieval Church's failure to deal adequately with the popular movements of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, because attention was constantly directed away from the Church's role in causing heresy. This was compounded by polemicists' firm belief that what is opposed to 'the truth' cannot derive from the true Church, and consequently that heresy must originate from outside the true Church. The medieval polemicists' understanding of the causes of heresy is therefore paradoxical. On the one hand, heresy belonged to the here-and-now, and was the result of immediate factors such as pride. On the other hand, heresy was part of a wider scheme, in which heresy was permitted to exist by God as a legitimate part of the temptations of the Church, and was seen as having a supernatural existence of its own. Nowhere is this paradox clearer than in the polemicists' explanations for the origins of individual heretical sects, to which we now turn.

Chapter Four

THE CONTINUITY OF HERESY

This chapter will consider what the polemicists' accounts of the origins of individual sects can add to the concept of heresy already outlined. The polemical texts which deal with the origins of heresy fall roughly into two groups. The first consists of those texts which purport to give a factual or 'historical' account of the origins of individual sects, excluding the Cathars. The second consists of texts dealing with the Cathars, which attempt to trace the historical antecedents of that sect. As illustrations of polemical methods of explaining the origins of heresy, the two groups of texts present a striking contrast - so striking in fact that polemicists seem to be approaching the problem from two mutually incompatible directions.

The first group of 'historical' texts concentrates mainly on the Waldensians, although other sects make an occasional appearance. On the whole they do not vary substantially from non-polemical sources which deal with the origins of the Waldensians - Walter Map's *De nugis curialium* (1182-92), for example, or the *Chronicon universale anonymi Laudunensis* (1220). The earliest polemical account of Waldensian origins is contained in Bernard of Fontcaude's treatise *Adversum Waldensium sectam liber*, written around 1190. This places it a little later than Walter Map's version of events, but earlier than the *Chronicon anonymi Laudunensis* and Stephen of Bourbon's *De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*. More importantly, it post-dates Lucius III's condemnation of the Waldensians at the Council of Verona in 1184; significant because the tone of such treatises becomes markedly fiercer after

that event.¹ Bernard's account does not appear to be related to Map's or any other account, which would support the supposition that Bernard was speaking from his personal experience as an adjudicator in a trial of heretics organised by the Bishop of Narbonne:

While the Lord Lucius, of renowned remembrance, was the ruler of the Holy Roman Church, new heretics suddenly raised up their head... Although they had been condemned by the aforesaid supreme pontiff, they have vomited their perfidious virus far and wide through the region by audacious ventures. On this account the Lord Bernard Archbishop of Narbonne, distinguished by the religion and honour of God, zealous for the law of God, has himself set a strong defence for the Church of God against them. Therefore, having summoned many people, both clergy and laity, religious and seculars, he called a trial. Need I say more? When the case had been most carefully investigated, they were condemned. Afterwards, however, they nevertheless dared secretly and publicly to sow the seed of their wickedness. So they were again called to a discussion, although this had already been abundant, with certain people, both clergy and laity. And so that the dispute would not be drawn out for a long time, a certain priest was chosen as judge by both parties, namely Raymond of Daventry; since he was a religious man and feared God, of noble race but more noble conduct. Therefore when the day assigned to the case had arrived, and the parties had gathered together, and very many other clergy and laity, they were accused by the true Catholics over certain chapters in which they expressed evil opinions: and each one was individually dealt with and disputed for a long time thereafter, and many authorities were put forward by both sides. When, therefore, the allegations of the parties had been heard; the aforesaid judge gave sentence in writing in a definitive judgement, and pronounced that the heretical opinions of which they had been accused were contained in the chapters.²

¹Gonnet, 'Le cheminement des Vaudois', p. 324.

²'Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae praesidente domino Lucio, inclytae recordationis; subito extulerunt caput novi haeretici... Hi, quamvis a praefato summo pontifice condemnati, virus suae perfidiae longe, lateque per orbem temerario ausu evomuerunt. Ea propter contra eos pro Ecclesia Dei dominus Bernardus Narbonensis archiepiscopus, religione et Dei honestate insignis, zelans legem Dei, se fortem murum opposuit. Accitis itaque pluribus tam clericis quam laicis, religiosis ac saecularibus, ad iudicium vocavit. Quid plura? Causa diligentissime investigata, condemnati sunt. Nihilominus tamen postea, et clam et publice semen suae nequitiae spargere ausi sunt. Unde rursum, quamvis ex abundantia, ad disceptationem vocati sunt, per quosdam tam clericos quam laicos. Et, ne lis diutius protraheretur, electus est ab utraque parte iudex quidam sacerdos, Raimundus scilicet de Daventria; vir siquidem religiosus ac timens Deum, nobilis genere, sed conversatione nobilior. Assignata igitur die causae adveniente, congregatis invicem partibus, aliisque quam plurimis clericis et laicis, de quibusdam capitulis, in quibus male sentiebant, a veris

This account appears to be a straightforward, 'historical', report of events of which the author was an eye-witness. Unlike Bernard of Fontcaude, who does not even mention Valdes, the starting point of Stephen of Bourbon's description of Waldensian origins is the heresiarch himself - of some significance since neither Map nor the Anonymous of Laon accords Valdes the status of heresiarch, and in line with the increasing concentration on 'the heretic'.³ Stephen's description of Valdes in these terms is perhaps the beginning of the 'mythologizing' of the author of the sect, who as time passed would become a shadowy and much more sinister figure. It was also an effective part of the polemical strategy to concentrate their attack on the venerated founder of a sect. All of this was in keeping with the focus on 'the heretic'; after all, a heresiarch was a much viler person than a simple heretic since he was not content to keep his opinions to himself but engaged in proselytizing activities. Stephen first comments on how the Waldensians received their various names (Waldensians from their founder Valdes, the Poor of Lyon because it was in that city that they began their profession of poverty) and notes that they call themselves the Poor Spirits, from the Dominical saying 'Blessed are the poor in spirit' - particularly apt, since they are indeed poor in spiritual fruits and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.⁴ Stressing that his account is based on eye-witness information, he goes on to explain how Valdes had obtained translations of various books, including the Bible and other *auctoritates*.⁵ Having resolved to lead a life of poverty as a

Catholicis accusati sunt: eisque per singula respondentibus, hinc inde diu disputatum est, et ab utraque parte multae productae auctoritates. Auditis igitur partium allegationibus; praefatus iudex per scriptum definitivam dedit sententiam, et haereticos esse in capitulis, de quibus accusati fuerant, pronuntiavit.' *Adversus Waldensium sectam*, Prologus: i-iv (PL 204, 793-5).

³Thouzellier, *Catharisme et Valdéisme*, p. 16.

⁴*De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 342 (Lecoy de la Marche, p. 290).

⁵*De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 342 (Lecoy de la Marche, pp. 290-91).

result of what he read in the Gospels, Valdes embarked on an itinerant life of preaching, encouraging others to do the same. Stephen continues:

But when, out of their temerity and ignorance they had spread many errors and scandals around the area, having been summoned by the archbishop of Lyons, who was called John, he banned them from introducing themselves to the exposition of scripture or to preaching. But they resorted to the reply of the apostle (in Acts v. e), their leader, usurping the office of Peter, said, just as he [Peter] had done to the high priest, "It is better to obey God than men"- [the God] who had commanded the apostles "Preach the gospel to all creatures (at the end of Mark)." Just as though the Lord had said to them what he had said to the apostles, who nevertheless did not presume to preach until they had been endowed with power from on high, until they had been purified with the most full and perfect knowledge, and had received the gift of all tongues. Therefore, these people, namely Valdes and his companions, first fell into disobedience through presumption and usurpation of the apostolic office, then into contumacy, then into sentence of excommunication. After they had been expelled from the area, they were summoned to the council which was held in Rome before the Lateran [Council] and being pertinacious, were afterwards judged schismatics.⁶

The tone of Stephen's text, both in this and other passages, is highly polemical, demonstrating the increasing concern with the question of what kind of people were heretics. It is interesting to note in passing that Stephen describes two stages of condemnation, the first being the judgement that the Waldensians are schismatics. It is only when they continue their activities after this judgement that they appear to become heretics. In practice, though, there is little difference here between the categories of schismatic and heretic,

⁶Cum autem ex temeritate sua et ignorancia multos errores et scandala circumquaque diffunderent, vocati ab archiepiscopo Lugdunensi, qui Johannes vocabatur, prohibuit eis ne intromitterent se de scripturis exponendis vel predicandis. Ipsi autem recurrerunt ad responsionem apostolorum (in Act. v. e); magister eorum, usurpans Petri officium, sicut ipse respondit principibus sacerdotum, ait: "Obedire oportet magis Deo quam hominibus;" qui preceperat apostolis: "Predicate evangelium omni creature (in fine Marci)." Quasi hoc dixisset Dominus eis quod dixerat apostolis, qui tamen predicare non presumpserunt usquequo induti virtute ex alto fuerunt, usquequo perfectissime et plenissime sciencia perlustrati fuerunt, et donum linguarum omnium susceperunt. Hi ergo, Valdensis videlicet et sui, primo ex presumptione et officii apostolici usurpacione ceciderunt in inobedienciam, deinde in contumaciam, deinde in excommunicacionis sentenciam. Post expulsi ab illa terra, ad concilium quod fuit Rome ante Lateranense vocati et pertinaces, fuerunt scismatici postea iudicati'. *De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 342 (Lecoy de la Marche, pp. 292-93).

another indication of the gradual merging of these two concepts. The dominant themes, however, are the basic components of the stereotype of the heretic: the ignorance, presumption and obstinacy of the *illitterati* Waldensians. This emphasis was to be sustained by Bernard Gui in his description of Valdes and the beginnings of his sect:

The sect or heresy of the Valdenses or the Poor of Lyon began around the year of our Lord 1170; the agent and inventor of which was a certain citizen of Lyon by the name of *Valdesius* or *Valdensis*, from whom his followers were named, who was rich and, abandoning everything, proposed to observe poverty and evangelical perfection just as the apostles had observed them... and the aforesaid *Valdesius* or *Valdensis* made many people of both sexes, men and women, accomplices in the same presumption and sent them forth to preach as disciples... But being summoned by the archbishop of Lyons, the lord John of Belles-Mains, they were banned by him on account of such presumption, but they had very little desire to obey, simulating madness as their cover, and saying that it is greater to obey God, who ordered the apostles to preach the gospel to all creatures, than men, boasting that the apostles had said this to themselves; and they had the temerity to assert that they were the imitators and successors of the apostles through a false profession of poverty and a fictitious air of sanctity, despising prelates and clerics, because they possessed riches and lived in luxury. And so, through the aforesaid presumption in usurping offices, they became teachers of error; and, being ordered to desist, they were made disobedient and contumacious; and then they were excommunicated and expelled from the city and countryside. But at length, at a certain council at Rome which was held before the Lateran council, because they were pertinacious, they were judged schismatic and then were condemned as heretics.⁷

⁷Valdensium seu Pauperum de Lugduno secta et heresis incepit circa annum Domini M^m C^m LXX^m; cujus actor et inventor fuit quidam civis Lugdunensis, nomine Valdesius seu Valdensis, a quo sectatores ejus fuerunt taliter nominati, qui dives rebus extitit et relictis omnibus proposuit servare paupertatem et perfectionem evangelicam sicut apostoli servaverunt... dictusque Valdesius seu Valdensis multos homines utriusque sexus viros et mulieres ad similem presumptionem complices sibi fecit ipsosque ad predicandum tanquam discipulos emittebat... Vocati, autem ab archiepiscopo Lugdunensi, domino Johanne de Bellis Manibus, super tanta presumptione prohibiti sunt ab eodem, set obedire minime voluerunt, in velamen sue vesanie pretendentes et dicentes quod oportebat magis Deo quam hominibus obedire, qui precepit apostolis omni creature evangelium predicare, arrogantes sibi id quod apostolis erat dictum; quorum apostolorum imitatores et successores falsa paupertatis professione et ficta sanctitatis ymagine se esse temerarie asserebant, aspernantes prelatos et clericos, quia divitiis habundabant et in deliciis vivebant. Sic itaque, ex presumptuosa usurpatione officii predicandi, facti sunt magistri erroris; et, moniti ut desisterent, inobedientes et contumaces effecti sunt; et exinde excommunicati ab illa civitate

As Mollat points out, Gui's text is based on the account of Waldensian origins contained in Stephen of Bourbon's *De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*.⁸ Factually there is little variation between the two texts, although the tone of Gui's account is perhaps more measured than Stephen's, which is the more polemical of the two. The Anonymous of Passau's account (c. 1260's), on the other hand, appears to derive from a different tradition. Not only is Valdes specifically mentioned, being described as one of the *maiores* of Lyons, but his conversion to the apostolic life is linked to a terrifying experience of sudden death:

The sect of the Poor of Lyons was born in this way: When some noble citizens were together in Lyons, it happened that one of their number suddenly died in front of them. Whereupon one of the nobles was so greatly terrified that he immediately bequeathed great riches to the poor. And because of this a great multitude of the poor flooded to him, whom he taught to keep to voluntary poverty with him and to be imitators of Christ and the apostles. For since he was somewhat educated, he taught them the new testament in the common tongue. When he had been reprehended for such temerity by the bishop, he disregarded it and began to press his teaching, telling his disciples that the more evil living a cleric the more he would look askance at their holy life and perfect teaching. But when the pope imposed sentence of excommunication on them, they pertinaciously disregarded it, and so their teaching advances on all those points to this day.⁹

et patria sunt expulsi. Demum vero in quodam concilio, quod fuit Rome ante Lateranense concilium celebratum, cum essent pertinaces, fuerunt scismatici iudicati et deinde ut heretici condempnati.' *Practica inquisitionis*, II: i (Mollat, vol. I, pp. 34-36). The council to which Bernard refers is the Third Lateran Council (1179), presided over by Pope Alexander III.

⁸Mollat, vol. I, p. 34, n. 1. Mollat's text prints the phrases and sections taken from Stephen in italics.

⁹'Secta Pauperum de Lugduno est orta hoc modo: Cum cives maiores essent pariter in Lugduno, contigit quendam mori ex eis subito coram eis. Unde quidam de maioribus inter eos tantum fuit territus, quod statim magnum thesaurum pauperibus erogavit. Et ex hoc maxima multitudo pauperum confluit ad eum, quos docuit secum habere voluntariam paupertatem et esse imitatores Christi et apostolorum. Cum enim aliquantulum esset litteratus, novi testamenti textum docuit eos vulgariter. Pro qua temeritate cum fuisset ab episcopo reprehensus, contempsit et cepit instare doctrine sue dicens discipulis suis, quod clerus, quanto male vite esset, invideret sancte vite ipsorum et perfecte doctrine. Cum autem papa sententiam excommunicationis tulisset in eos, pertinaciter contempserunt, et sic usque hodie in omnibus terminis illis proficit doctrina ipsorum'. *Die Anfänge der Waldenser* (Patschovsky & Selge, p. 19).

Pseudo-David of Augsburg's text (mid-thirteenth century) follows a similar pattern to Gui's, although, like Bernard of Fontcaude, he does not mention Valdes:

The birth of this sect, which is called the *Pover de Leun* or the Poor of Lyons... is said to have been like this: Amongst the Lyonese were certain simple lay-people who, presuming to put themselves above others, boasted that they wished to live entirely according to evangelical teaching and to follow it perfectly to the letter, asking the lord pope Innocent to confirm this form of living with his own and his successors' authority, recognising thus far that primacy of apostolic power resided with him. Afterwards they resolved of their own accord, so that they might more fully show themselves to be Christ's disciples and the successors of the apostles, also to proudly assume to themselves the office of preaching, saying that Christ had ordered his disciples to preach the gospel, and since they dared to interpret the words of the gospel in their own way, seeing that no-one else observed the gospel completely to the letter, they said that they alone were the true imitators of Christ. And when the Church saw that they had usurped the office of preaching to themselves, which had not been committed to them, because they were uneducated and lay-people, she banned them, as she ought, and as they refused to obey, excommunicated them.¹⁰

In many ways Pseudo-David's account represents a perfect summary of the medieval concept of heresy: all the typical characteristics of pride, presumption and contumacy are present; the heretics also being described as 'uneducated' and 'simple lay-people' who dared to usurp the office of preaching and defied the Church's ban. All of these issues strike at the heart of the institutional Church's effort to control the spiritual lives of the laity. At

¹⁰Ortus illius secte, que dicitur Pover de Leun sive Pauperes de Lugduno,... sic se fertur habuisse: Apud Lugdunum fuerunt quidam simplices layci, qui quodam spiritu inflammati et supra ceteros de se presumentes iactabant, se omnino vivere secundum ewangelii doctrinam et illam ad literam perfecte servare, postulantes a domino papa Innocencio hanc vivendi formam sua auctoritate sibi et suis sequacibus confirmari, adhuc recognoscentes primatum apud ipsum residere apostolice potestatis. Postea ceperunt ex se, ut plenius se Christi discipulos et apostolorum successores ostentarent, eciam officium predicationis sibi iactanter assumere, dicentes Christum precepisse suis discipulis ewangelium predicare, et quia sensu proprio verba ewangelii interpretari presumpserunt, videntes nullos alios ewangelium iuxta literam omnino servare, quod se facere velle iactaverunt, se solos Christi veros imitatores esse dixerunt. Cumque ecclesia videret, eos predicationis sibi officium usurpare, quod eis commissum non fuerat, cum essent ydiote et layci, prohibuit eos, ut debuit, et nolentes obedire excommunicavit.' *De inquisitione hereticorum*, 4 (Preger, pp. 205-206).

the end of the fourteenth century, Peter of Pilichdorff's explanation of Waldensian origins is detailed, but does not deviate significantly from earlier accounts:

The birth and origin of the Waldensian heretics is as follows: although the sons of iniquity spread lies amongst the simple people, saying that their sect had lasted from the times of Pope Sylvester, namely when the Church began to hold her own possessions: the heresiarchs do not believe this to be lawful: since the apostles of Christ were ordered to live without belongings of their own, Matth. 10: *Do not possess gold, or silver, etc...* Whence it should be noted that some eight hundred years after Pope Sylvester, during the time of Pope Innocent II, in the town of Walden, which is situated in the borders of France, there was a certain rich citizen, who either read himself or heard that the Lord said to a certain youth: *Since a rich man will enter with difficulty into the kingdom of heaven. And again: It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.* And a little later, Peter said to the Lord: *Look, we have relinquished everything, and followed you.* That Peter Valdes, when he heard this or read the scriptures, thought that the Apostolic Life did not now exist on earth. Whereupon he decided to renew it; and selling everything and giving to the poor, began to lead life of poverty: which, when it was observed by certain others, touched them to the heart, and they did likewise... But when they had remained in poverty for some time, they also began to think that the apostles of Christ had not only been poor, but had also been preachers, and they began to preach the word of God. Which, after it had reached the Apostolic See, the Apostolic Lord ordered them to stop; since the preaching of the word of God was not appropriate for rough and illiterate people; they refused to obey, as if the Roman Curia prohibited this out of envy. As soon as this was discovered, the Church excommunicated them: and as they contumaciously resisted they were condemned by the Church.¹¹

¹¹Ortus et origo Waldensium haereticorum talis est: licet iniquitatis filii coram simplicibus mentiantur, dicentes, sectam eorum durasse a temporibus Sylvestri papae, quando videlicet Ecclesia coepit habere proprias possessiones: hoc haeresiarchae reputant non licere: cum apostoli Christi sine proprio iussi sint vivere, Matth. 10: *Nolite possidere aurum, neque argentum, etc...* Unde notandum quod sere octingentis annis post Papam Sylvestrum, tempore Innocentii Papae II, in civitate Walden, qui in finibus Franciae sita est, fuit quidam civis dives, qui vel ipse audivit, Dominum dixisse cuidam adolescenti, Matth. 19: *Si vis perfectus esse, vade et vende omnia, quae habes, et da pauperibus.* Et cum ille tristis abisset, eo quod dives fuerat, multas possessiones habens, dixit Dominus: *Quia dives difficile intrabit in regnum caelorum.* Et iterum: *Multo facilius est camelum per foramen acus transire quam divitem intrare in regnum caelorum.* Et post pauca, dixit Petrus Domino: *Ecce nos reliquimus omnia, et secuti sumus te.* Putabat ille Petrus Waldensis; cum hanc audiret, aut legeret scripturam, quod Vita Apostolica iam non esset in terra. Unde, cogitabat eam innovare; et omnibus venditis, et pauperibus datis, coepit vitam pauperem ducere: quod videntes quidam alii, corde

Peter's text contains the usual motifs, but more significant is the issue of the Roman Church's authority. The ultimate defiance of this Church's power is reported here: the heretics' denial of the existence or validity of the Donation of Constantine. This was an issue which affected not just the Church's authority, but which questioned the Roman Church's *raison d'être* and its right to exist at all in its current form.

The origins of other heretical groups are not so well documented as those of the Waldensians. Bernard Gui notes that the sect of the Pseudo-Apostles 'began and was invented around the year of our Lord 1260 from a certain person who was called Gerard Segarelli of Parma, where he was finally condemned as a heresiarch by the judgement of the church and burned'.¹² He gives more detail about the origins of the Beguins, who:

began to appear and be uncovered in their erroneous opinions around the year of the Lord 1315, more or less, although they were previously suspected by very many generally; and afterwards in successive years many were captured in the provinces of Narbonne and Toulouse and Catalonia and were detected and apprehended in errors, and many people of both sexes were found and judged to be heretics and were burned after the year of the Lord 1317, most of all in Narbonne, Beziers, in the diocese of Agde and in Lodève near to Lunel which is in the diocese of Maguelonne, and in Carcassonne and Toulouse, where three of them were foreigners.¹³

compuncti sunt, et fecerunt similiter. Cum autem in (sic) diu in paupertate stetissent, inceperunt cogitare, quod etiam Apostoli Christi non solum erant pauperes, imo etiam praedicatores, coeperunt et ipsi praedicare verbum Dei. Quod, postquam ad sedem Apostolicam pervenisset, mandat Dominus Apostolicus, quod cessarent; cum praedicatio verbi Dei rudibus et illiteratis non conveniat; ipsi noluerunt obedire; quasi hoc Romana Curia ex invidia prohiberet. Quo comperto, ecclesia excommunicavit eos: et ipsi restitentes contumaciter ab Ecclesia condemnati sunt.' *Contra haeresim Waldensium* (MBVP¹ 13, pp. 312-13).

¹²Apostolorum secta apostatica et heretica cepit et inventa fuit circa annum Domini M CC LX a quodam qui dictus est Gerardus Segarelli de Parma, ubi tandem fuit tanquam heresiarcha per iudicium ecclesie condemnatus pariter et combustus...' *Practica inquisitionis*, III: 1 (Mollat, vol. I, p. 84).

¹³Beguinarum secta... modernis temporibus exsurrexit in provincia Provincie et in Provincia Narbonensi et in quibusdam locis provincie Tholosane que ab antiquo includitur sub provincia Narbonensi. Ceperunt autem manifestari et detegi in suis opinionibus erroneis circa annum Domini M^m CCC^m XV^m, paulo plus minusve, quamvis prius suspecti communiter a pluribus haberentur; fueruntque postmodum successivis annis in provincia

These sections differ little in tone and approach from the material on the Waldensians. However, a new theme is evident here: the implication that the sect of the Beguins had existed before the Church had discovered them and proclaimed their heresy, again suggesting that heresy had a life and existence of its own which was independent of the Church's recognition or condemnation.

The historical accuracy or otherwise of these accounts has been extensively dealt with elsewhere, and is not a matter for this thesis.¹⁴ Although the details of these accounts may vary, the salient points are clear: embarking on a life of poverty, the taking up of suspect activities (either reading Scripture in the vernacular or preaching, or both), a warning from the ecclesiastical authorities, continued disobedience and eventual excommunication. There is some sense of progression within the group towards a more stylised description of heresy. The earliest account, that of Bernard of Fontcaude, describes the Waldensians as a 'perfidious virus' and hints at a supernatural explanation for their name,¹⁵ but is otherwise sober and factual in tone. Most significantly, the Waldensians are here subjected to a careful analysis of their beliefs by the ecclesiastical authorities. Only after those beliefs had been pronounced heretical were they condemned. In other words, we have in Bernard's account the traditional concept of heresy, based on the holding of theological error. The motifs of ignorance, pride and obstinacy which

Narbonensi et Tholosana et in Cathalonia plures capti et detenti et deprehensi in erroribus et plures utriusque sexus inventi sunt et judicati heretici et combusti, ab anno Domini M^o CCC^o XVII^o citra, maxime Narbone, Biterris et in dyocesi Agathensi et in Lodova et apud Lunellum Magalonensis dyocesis et in Carcassona, et Tholose tres alienigene.' *Practica inquisitionis*, IV: 1 (Mollat, vol. I, p. 108).

¹⁴Amongst the many works dealing with the historical origins of the Waldensians some of the most recent are Audisio, *Les 'Vaudois': Naissance, vie et mort d'une dissidence*, chs 1-2; Merlo, 'Le mouvement Vaudois des origines à fin du XIII^e siècle; Thouzellier, 'Considerations sur les origines du Valdésisme'.

¹⁵See this chapter below, pp. 162-63.

dominate the later accounts are absent. Compare this for example with the highly polemical tone of Stephen of Bourbon's account, where the Waldensians are condemned as heretical on the basis of these very motifs. However, there appears to be little else holding these accounts together as a 'type' of explanations for the origins of heresy. Some are more elaborate than others, but there is no chronological pattern to this: Bernard of Fontcaude's account is as detailed as some of the later ones. All the texts in this group, with the exception of Bernard's, mention the characteristics of heresy - secrecy, presumption, contumacy and so on - but again with a degree of emphasis which varies randomly, rather than becoming stronger over the period of time which the texts cover. Similarly, the hints at a more supernatural concept of heresy appear indiscriminately, rather than following a chronological pattern. What does hold this group of texts together, however, is the fact that all of these reports place the origins of the sects with which they are dealing in the very recent past. Contemporary readers would have little difficulty in identifying the significance of this emphasis. Schooled as they were in the ecclesiological importance of a direct historical and spiritual lineage between the Roman Church and Christ via the Apostles, they would immediately grasp that a sect which could be dated to within the memory of a couple of generations could not possibly be the true Church. It is on this basis that the group of texts implicitly condemn the sects as heretical. This point of view is not in itself remarkable, but when these accounts are compared with those describing the origins of the Cathars the contrast is significant.

Eckbert of Schönau's description of the origins of the Cathars occurs in the first of his *Tresdecim sermones contra Catharos*. He begins by explaining that the Cathar sect 'undoubtedly originates from the heresiarch Mani whose

doctrine was accursed and totally venomous, and has taken root in that perverse people', although he is careful to point out that they have also taken up many beliefs which were not taught by Mani.¹⁶ He then moves on to a description of the emergence of Mani and his sect:

But Mani himself, if I may now speak a little of him, came from Persia; and in fact he was originally called *Manes*, but afterwards he was called *Manichaeus* by his disciples, in case he should seem mad, *manes* deriving from *mania*, which means insanity. But in this way he was insane, in that he said he was the Holy Spirit, and had been sent by Christ into the world, just as he promised when he ascended into heaven. And in the same way he called himself the apostle of Christ, just as if he had been sent by him. And so his disciples boasted that the promise of Christ about the Spirit comforter had been fulfilled in their teacher. He chose twelve from the number of his apostles, whom he had as his quasi-apostles, so that in this way he could hold to the form of Christ, who chose twelve apostles for himself from his disciples: which number his imitators observe to the present day; because they have twelve of their choice whom they call teachers, and the thirteenth is their head, but they have seventy-two bishops who are ordained by the teachers, and presbyters and deacons who are ordained by the bishops, and amongst them these are called 'the elect'. But those who have not achieved such perfection as the elect are called 'hearers'. But those who seem suitable are sent out from all of them, in order either to sustain and augment their error where it already is, or to sow it where it is not.¹⁷

¹⁶'Sciendum vero est et non celandum ab auribus vulgi quoniam indubitanter secta eorum de quibus agimus originem accepit a manicheo heresiarcha, cuius doctrina maledicta erat et tota venenosa et radicata est in populo isto perverso.' *Sermones*, I (Harrison, vol. I, p. 17).

¹⁷'Manicheus autem iste, ut nunc pauca de illo loquar, a persia oriundus erat et primo quidem manes dicebatur postea vero a discipulis suis manicheus appellatus est, ne insanus videretur et dictus manes a mania quod est insanie nomen. Sic autem insanus erat ut diceret se esse spiritum sanctum et se missum fuisse a christo in mundum sicut promiserat cum ascensurus esset in celum. Ideoque et christi se apostolum dicebat quasi missum ab ipso. Inde et discipuli eius ex hoc gloriabantur quod in magistro ipsorum completa fuisset promissio christi de spiritu paraclito. Ex numero discipulorum suorum duodecim elegit quos quasi apostolos suos habebat, ut in hoc haberet formam christi qui ex discipulis suis duodecim sibi elegit apostolos. Quem numerum imitatores eius et hodierna die observant, qui ex electis suis habent duodecim quos appellant magistros et tertium decimum principem ipsorum, episcopos autem septuagintaduos qui ordinantur a magistris, et presbyteros ac diaconos qui ab episcopis ordinantur et hi electi inter eos vocantur. Qui vero non ad tantam perfectionem pervenerunt ut electi possint dici auditores vocantur. Mittuntur autem ex omnibus qui idonei videntur ad eorum errorem, vel ubi est sustentandum et augendum, vel ubi non est seminandum.' *Sermones*, I (Harrison, vol. I, pp. 18-20). The sentence 'Qui vero...vocantur' does not appear in Migne's text.

Eckbert's text is particularly significant because it has often been cited as a prime example of the medieval tendency casually to describe any heretical sect which was vaguely tinged with dualism as 'Manichean'. Much of this section is indeed based on material taken from Augustine's *De haeresibus*. In particular the passage about the 'apostolic' structure of the sect ('He chose twelve... where it is not') appears to be reproduced directly from Augustine.¹⁸ The important point here, however, is the function of the quotations from Augustine within the context of Eckbert's own sermon and its purpose. The prevailing scholarly view is that Eckbert did not use first-hand sources but was heavily dependent on Augustine, and so indiscriminately applied Augustine's description of the Manicheans to the twelfth-century Cathars.¹⁹ He therefore mistakenly identified Catharism as a revival of the ancient heresy, the argument runs, and attributed some doctrines to the Cathars which they may not have held. Harrison argues strongly against this position, maintaining that although Eckbert did use Augustine's anti-Manichean works, he did so selectively in order to illustrate the historical origins of the Cathars. Whilst Eckbert believed the Cathars to be historically descended from the Manicheans he recognised that their beliefs and practices had been substantially modified in the process, and that as a sect they were quite distinct from their predecessor. Eckbert's recapitulation of the early history of Mani's sect was not intended to describe the contemporary sect of the Cathars, but rather to illustrate wherein their origins lay.²⁰

¹⁸Harrison, vol. I, notes for lines 235-49.

¹⁹For a review of this scholarship and the contrary position see Harrison, vol. II, ch. 2.

²⁰Harrison, vol. II, ch. 4.

Harrison's distinction is a subtle one. He is correct in pointing out that this passage describes the beliefs and practices of the Manicheans, rather than those of the Cathars. For example, the phrase 'which number his imitators observe to the present day', appears at a casual glance to apply to the Cathars. In fact they are Augustine's words rather than Eckbert's, and refer to the fourth-century 'imitators' of Mani rather than the twelfth-century adherents of Catharism. This does not mean that Eckbert saw no continuity between the two, but rather that he was careful to distinguish between them. He does in fact take pains to avoid what modern scholars have always accused him of, that is, indiscriminately applying Augustine's description of Manicheism to the Cathars. This is clear from his own words further on in this section, where he maintains that he has 'truthfully ascertained' that the description of Manichean doctrines and practices which he has just given does indeed apply to contemporary Cathars.²¹ It is true that he adds an appendix of Augustine's anti-Manichean writings to his treatise (from the *Contra epistolam Manichaei*, the *De moribus Manichaeorum* and the *De haeresibus*),²² but the purpose of this was 'so that those who read it may fully perceive the whole heresy from the beginning, and understand why this heresy is fouler than all the heresies.'²³ In other words his aim was not to prove that the two sects were one and the same, but to describe the antecedents of the Cathars and illustrate their historical development. Not only did Eckbert believe that the two sects were spiritually linked through common error, but he also perceived a continuous historical link between Manicheism and the Cathars, whom he believed to be descended from a

²¹ *Sermones*, I (Harrison, vol. I, p. 22).

²² Harrison, vol. I, pp. 352-73.

²³ '...ut qui legerint possint quasi a fundamento totam hanc heresim plenius agnoscere et intelligant quoniam hec heresis omnium heresum sentina est.' *Sermones*, I (Harrison, vol. I, p. 24).

particular branch of Manicheism called the *Catharistae*.²⁴ Harrison's thesis suggests that Eckbert's perception of this link was more complex than has been generally supposed, but he modifies rather than contradicts the majority scholarly view of the *Sermones*. In any case, whichever view is correct, the text still illustrates the widespread conviction that the Cathars were descended from the Manicheans. Eckbert may be significant in being the first person who tried to prove the existence of that link systematically, but he is spokesman for a belief which was axiomatic not only amongst polemicists, but amongst many other contemporaries.

Strikingly similar to Eckbert's text is Stephen of Bourbon's account of Cathar origins; in fact it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Stephen made use of the first of Eckbert's *Sermones* in his own work. The Cathars are immediately linked back to Mani, in words which correspond almost directly with those used by Eckbert. The play on the name *Manes* and its similarity to the Latin word for madness (*mania*) is maintained:

The Manicheans, whose plague has infected many places up to the present day, according to what the blessed Augustine and Isidore said, originated from a certain person from Persia called Mani, who [was] truly mad along with his followers, in fact as in name, and demoniacal, just as the Apostle first wrote [to] Timothy, III a: 'in the last days people will turn away from the faith, listen to the teachings of demons, prohibit marriage and abstain from meat etc.' This man arose destructively in the primitive Church after the time of the apostles, saying that he was the Spiritual Comforter, whom the Lord had promised to send to his disciples. This Mani, in order to avoid the name of insanity, they called *Manicheus*, and from him [they called] themselves Manicheans, rather than being called maniacs.²⁵

²⁴Harrison, vol. I, p. 22.

²⁵'Manichei, quorum pestis adhuc multa loca inficit, secundum quod dicunt beatus Augustinus et Ysidorus, originem habuerunt a quodam Persa dicto Manes, qui vere maniacus [erat] cum suis sequacibus, et re ut nomine, et demoniacus, sicut dicit Apostolus prima [ad] Timotheum, III a: "In novissimis diebus discedent quidam a fide, attendentes doctrinis demoniorum, prohabentes (sic) nubere et abstinere a cibis etc." Hic post apostolorum tempora in primitiva Ecclesia surrexit pestifere, dicens se esse Paraclitum Spiritum, quem Dominus suis promiserat missurus discipulis. Hunc Manem sui, ad

He goes on to detail the various names by which the present-day Manicheans, the Cathars, are known, implying however, that whatever name they go under, all the Cathars are demoniacal madmen at heart. He continues with a paraphrase of the same quotation about the early Manicheans from Augustine which Eckbert had given:

But the said Mani, as Augustine said, chose twelve people following Christ's example, whom he called apostles, which [name]²⁶ the Manicheans hold to this day, one being over all the principal leaders, other bishops, and presbyters, who are ordained by him, and deacons, whom they call the chosen. The errors of their perverse teaching are those which are collected together from the words of the blessed Augustine, from three of his books, one of which is entitled *Contra Manicheos*, and the other of which is entitled *De moribus Manicheorum*, similarly from the book *De heresibus*, in which many of their errors and abuses are contained: but we will briefly enumerate certain of the things about which they err in this work.²⁷

These are the same three works of Augustine which Eckbert had used, extracts from which he had attached to the end of his treatise.

Although Moore sees Eckbert's *Sermones* as being in some respects a direct forerunner of thirteenth-century inquisitors' treatises, he perceives that body of literature as being more systematic in its approach and more precise in its information than earlier treatises.²⁸ Nevertheless there is still a strong legendary element in Anselm of Alessandria's account of the origins of the

vitandum nomen insanie, vocaverunt Manicheum, et se ab eo manicheos, cum potius vocandi essent maniaci'. *De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 344 (Lecoy de la Marche, pp. 299-300).

²⁶The word *nomen* which Lecoy de la Marche supplies in the text here may better be read as *numerus*, as in Eckbert's text.

²⁷'Dictus autem Manes, ut dicit Augustinus, duodecim elegit ad exemplum Christi, quos apostolos nominavit, quod [nomen] adhuc tenent Manichei, unum habentes supra omnes magistrum principalem, alios episcopos, et presbiteros, ab eis ordinatos, et diaconos, quos electos vocant. Errores illius perversi dogmatis sunt hi qui colliguntur ex verbis beati Augustini, de tribus ejus libris, de eo qui intitulatur *Contra Manicheos* et de alio qui intitulatur *De moribus Manicheorum*, item de libro *De heresibus*, in quibus multa de eorum erroribus et abusionibus continentur: quedam autem in quibus errant de his breviter numeramus'. *De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 344 (Lecoy de la Marche, p. 300).

²⁸*Origins of European Dissent*, p. 204.

Cathars in his *Tractatus de hereticis*. Although Anselm was writing specifically about the development of the Lombardy Cathars he saw them as linked to a wider and more ancient ancestry. His explanation of the early history of that connection, however, is 'mythical rather than historical', as Moore puts it. As in Eckbert's treatise, the original ancestor of the Cathars was Mani. Anselm gives a detailed description of how Mani's sect entered western Europe. Having adopted the doctrine of two principles:

he taught in the regions of Drugontia and Bulgaria and Philadelphia; and the heresy was multiplied there such that they created three bishops: in Drugontia, another in Bulgaria, another in Philadelphia.²⁹

The Greeks took the heresy to Constantinople, from where it was transmitted to France via the crusading Franks:

Presently the Greeks from Constantinople, who bordered on Bulgaria along three different sections, came there in order to trade, and, returning to their land because they had increased in number, they created a bishop there, who was called the bishop of the Greeks... Afterwards certain people from Slavonia, namely from the land which is called Bosnia, came to Constantinople in order to trade; returning to their land they preached, and having increased in number they created a bishop who was called the bishop of Slavonia or Bosnia.³⁰

As we have already seen in Ch. 2, it is not generally accepted that crusading or trading activities were even partly responsible for the emergence of popular heresy in the west. In the inquisitor's mind, however, there was not only a spiritual, but a continuous and visible historical link between Manicheism and Catharism. Although Dondaine believed Anselm's

²⁹Notandum quod in Persia fuit quidam qui vocabatur manes, qui ait primo intra se: Si deus est, unde sunt mala; et si deus non est, unde bona? Ex hoc posuit duo principia. Et docuit in partibus Drugontie et Bulgarie et Filadelfie; et multiplicata est ibi heresis ita quod fecerunt tres episcopos: Drugontie, alius (sic) Bulgarie, alius (sic) Filadelfie'. *Tractatus de hereticis*, I (Dondaine, 'La hiérarchie II', p. 308).

³⁰Postmodum greci de Constantinopolim, qui sunt confines Bulgarie per tres dietas (sic), iverunt causa mercacionis illuc, et reversi ad terram suam cum multiplicarentur, ibi fecerunt episcopum, qui dicitur episcopus grecorum... Postea quidam de Sclavonia, scilicet de terra que dicitur Bossona, iverunt Constantinopolim causa mercacionis; reversi ad terram suam predicaverunt et, multiplicati, constituerunt episcopum qui dicitur episcopus Sclavonie sive Bossone'. *Tractatus de hereticis*, I (Dondaine, 'La hiérarchie II', p. 308).

information to be accurate and was predisposed to accept the link which he made between the two sects,³¹ this has not been supported by later scholars, even though Moore points out that Anselm's account is reliable for the period after the 1170's.³² Before that date, however, Anselm's text has an air of unreality which suggests reliance on folk memory and preconception rather than on precise information gained during the course of inquisitorial work.

More incredible still is a text dealing with the origins of the Cathars which appears in four polemical works. The relevant passage first appears in Durand of Huesca's *Liber antiheresis* (written before 1207):

In the books of the pagans we read that a certain philosopher, who was called Pythagoras, had instituted certain errors; for he said that after death the souls of men enter into other bodies, either men or dumb animals or birds, and on that account the eating of flesh is abominated. The people of the present time have commended these errors to themselves; and behold the beginning of their sect. The Marcionites, the Cerinthians and the Ebionites, in the time in which we read that John the apostle preached in Asia, preached against the holy apostle John, said that the Son was less than the Father, and that all transitory things are not preserved by God, but made by evil; for which reason they were called *antichrists* by the blessed John. And your advocates received those errors from them. There were others in Persia, namely Zarohen and Arfaxat, who amongst other blasphemies said that the giver of the Mosaic law was the god of darkness; whose error was cursed by the blessed Matthew and Judah and Simon; and behold other defenders. There were others, namely Hymenaeus and Philetus,³³ who in opposition to Paul hardly believed in the resurrection at all, who were deservedly called Sadducees; and you believe similarly to those advocates. There was another who was ordained by the apostles, Nicholas by name, who having taught with the apostles said that for men to live with their own wives was one and the same sin as living with prostitutes or any other women. Similarly that person asserted

³¹'La hiérarchie II', pp. 243-45.

³²E. g. Moore, *Origins of European Dissent*, p. 172; Hamilton, 'Wisdom from the East', pp. 44-45.

³³Cf. 2 Tim. 2: 17.

two principles; which error was cursed in the Apocalypse, when the Lord said to the angel of the Ephesians: 'In this respect you have good, since you have hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans, whom I hate.'³⁴ And him likewise you have as your father. And there were others who were called Gnostics, who amongst other accursed things asserted two gods, one good and the other evil; and these you similarly have as fathers. There was another, Mani by name, and he asserted that all visible things were made by the devil. And there was another, Tatian by name, who abominated the flesh. And these you similarly have as fathers, and to many others whom it would take too long to enumerate.³⁵

This passage appears in a more concise form in a later work of Durand's, the *Contra Manichaeos* (1222-3), with the addition to the list of the Donatists and the omission of Pythagoras, the Gnostics and Mani.³⁶ Trying to pinpoint particular sources for this 'genealogy of error'³⁷ is not easy. As Dondaine points out, Durand was clearly familiar with Alan of Lille's *De fide catholica* (or at least with Book I which deals with the Cathars) since the *Liber antiheresis* reproduces the chapter *Quod Christus vere comederit et biberit* (I: i) of

³⁴Cf. Rev. 2: 6.

³⁵'In libris paganorum legimus quendam philosophum, qui piccagoras dicitur, quendam errorem instituisse; dicebat enim animas post mortem hominis alia corpora vel hominum vel pecorum vel avium ingredi, et ideo carnes abhominatus est. Huius errores moderni sibi vendicaverunt; et ecce initium secte eorum. Marchionem, cherintum, et ebionem, in tempore, quo iohannes apostolus predicabat, in asia fuisse legimus, qui contra sanctum iohannem apostolum predicantes minorem filium patrem [sic] dicebant, omniaque transitoria non a deo salvatore, set (sic) a maligno facta; ob quam causam a beato iohanne *antichristi* dicuntur. Et istos errores vestri patroni ab illis acceperunt. Fuerunt alii in persida, zeroen scilicet et arfaxat, qui inter reliquas blasphemias datorem mosaice legis deum tenebrarum dixerunt; quorum error a beato matheo et iuda et simone exsecratus est; et ecce alios patronos. Fuerunt alii, ymeneus scilicet et filetus, qui paulo resistentes resurrectionem minime credebant, qui saducei merito vocati sunt; et istos similiter habetis patronos. Fuit alius, qui ab apostolis ordinatus fuerat, nicholaus nomine, qui ab apostolis discedens unum et idem peccatum dixit hominem agere cum propria coniuge quam cum meretricibus vel quibuslibet feminis. Iste similiter duo principia asseruit; cuius error in apocalipsi detestatur, domino dicente angelo ephesi: "hoc habes bonum, quia odisti facta nicholaitarum, que ego odi." Et istum similiter habetis patronum. Fuerunt et alii, qui gnostici sunt dicti, qui inter cetera execramenta duos, unum bonum et alterum malum, deos asserebant; et istos similiter abetis patronos. Fuit et alius, manicheus nomine, qui omnia visibilia a diabolo facta asseruit. Fuit et alius, ticianus nomine, qui carnes abhominatus est. Et istos similiter abetis patronos, et quamplures alios, quos enumerare longissimum est.' *Liber antiheresis*, I: De statu ecclesie (Selge, vol. II, pp. 97-98).

³⁶*Contra Manichaeos*, XIV (Thouzellier, *Une somme*, pp. 237-39).

³⁷The phrase is Wakefield's. Cf. 'Notes on Some Antiheretical Writings', pp. 308-09.

Alan's treatise³⁸ and incorporates parts of other chapters.³⁹ Durand's genealogy does not appear in Alan's *De fide catholica*, and in only one place does there appear to be a direct link with that work and the *Liber antiheresis*. This occurs in a later chapter in Alan's *De fide catholica: Qua ratione dicunt haeretici, daemones in corporibus humanis puniri* (I: xi) which states that: 'those who assert this have fallen into a Pythagorean error, which asserts that after death the soul of a sinful man deservedly enters into the body of another man or of a brute animal.'⁴⁰ Although not identical to the statement about Pythagoras in the *Liber antiheresis*, it is certainly similar enough to suggest that Durand was using Alan's treatise in this instance. Wakefield and Evans note that Peter Martyr's statement about the derivation of Predestinarian errors may be an embryonic form of Durand's genealogy.⁴¹ A possible clue lies in the reference to Zarohen and Arfaxat, two magicians who are almost certainly fictitious characters.⁴² These two heretics appear in all occurrences of this genealogy, but there is only one other reference to them in the polemical literature, which occurs in Eckbert's *Sermones*. In the section on the origins of the Cathars in Sermon I, Eckbert notes that two people named Zaroc and Arfaxat taught various dualist errors in Persia prior to the emergence of Mani.⁴³ He does not, however, mention that they were opposed to the Mosaic Law, so Durand presumably obtained at least some of his information from elsewhere. Wakefield and Evans also suggest that the unidentifiable 'Zeno', mentioned by Peter Martyr, who taught that the soul does not live after the death of the body, may be a scribal error for 'Zarohen',

³⁸PL 210, 324.

³⁹Dondaine, 'Durand de Huesca et la polémique anti-cathare', pp. 238-39.

⁴⁰'Praeterea, qui hoc asserunt in errorem Pythagoricum cadunt, qui asseruit animam hominis merito peccati post mortem intrare in corpus alterius hominis vel bruti animalis. *De fide catholica*, I: i (PL 210, 317).

⁴¹Wakefield & Evans, p. 732, n. 39. See this chapter below, p. 168.

⁴²Ricchini, p. 411, n. 78. See also Selge, vol. II, p. 7, n. for line 24 & Thouzellier, *Une somme*, p. 75, n. for line 14.

⁴³*Sermones*, I (Harrison, vol. I, p. 22).

(incidentally giving some support to the possibility of a link between the two works),⁴⁴ but this rather tentative suggestion remains unsubstantiated. Another possibility is that the figure of Zarohen relates in some way to Zoroaster, from whom Mani was supposed to have derived some of his teachings. More likely, however, is that Zarohen (in these Latin texts *Zeroen*, *Zarden* and *Zaroc*) is a corruption of Zurvan; the mythical god of Zurvanism, a philosophical and religious offshoot of Zoroastrianism.⁴⁵ The identity of Arfaxat is even more problematic (the biblical references to a person of that name shedding no light on the problem),⁴⁶ unless through a confused tradition he can be identified as Artapat, an orthodox Zoroastrian opponent of Zurvanism.⁴⁷

What is certain is that Durand's works themselves became a source for future polemicists. In the early 1240's, Durand's genealogy was reworked by Moneta of Cremona in his monumental work *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*. This was in turn taken up by certain manuscript versions of Benedict of Alignan's *Tractatus fidei* (1261) which insert Moneta's genealogy, along with extracts from the *Brevis summula*, into the prologue to the *Tractatus fidei*.⁴⁸ Apart from rearranging the order slightly, the passage there is identical to the one in the *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*. Moneta's genealogy is offered as an explanation of the origins of the Cathars:

For it was a certain Pagan, Pythagoras by name, who said that the souls of men enter into other bodies, namely of men or

⁴⁴Wakefield & Evans, p. 732, n. 39.

⁴⁵The descriptions of the myth of Zurvan in fact come from Christian Armenian and Syriac authors; their common source may be Theodore of Mopsuestia (Gnoli, 'Zurvanism', p. 596). The standard work on Zurvanism is Zaehner, *Zurvan: A Zoroastrian Dilemma*. See also Obolensky, *The Bogomils*, pp. 14-15.

⁴⁶Gen. 10: 21; 1 Chron. 1: 17; Judith 1: 1; Lk. 3: 36.

⁴⁷Cf. Obolensky, *The Bogomils*, p. 14.

⁴⁸See Grabmann, 'Der Franziskanerbischof Benedictus de Alignano', pp. 50-64 for details of these mss. The genealogy appears CLM 7454, ff. 90^v-91^r.

dumb animals, with which error many Pagans agree, and they are called the *Pythagorici*, whom the Cathars, who posit two principles, imitate, even in their beginning. Certain other treacherous people were also in this error, namely Zarohen and Arfaxat, who said that the giver of the law of Moses was the Prince of darkness, from whom all the Cathars, as far as this error is concerned, are derived. There were also amongst the Jews the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection of the body, from whom all Cathars originate. There was a certain other person, Mani by name, who posited two principles, and two creations, and two natures, whence the Manichees are so-called, and from those certain of the Cathars took up the principles. The same asserted that all visible and transitory things were made by the Devil, hence they denied that Christ had assumed that flesh from the Virgin. But they rejected the Old Testament, whom for the most part the Cathars imitate. There was also a certain Tatian by name, from whom the *Tatiani* are so-called, who condemned the eating of flesh, whom the Cathars imitate. The same for the *Valentiniani* from Valentinus, said that Christ assumed nothing from the Virgin.⁴⁹

There are a few differences in Moneta's version of the genealogy: Hymenaeus and Philetus are replaced by the Sadducees themselves and references to the Marcionites, Cherinthians, Ebionites, Nicolaitans and Donatists are omitted. Moneta gives more information about Manichean beliefs than does Durand; otherwise this section is substantially the same as Durand's.

There is clearly a strong mythical element in both Durand's and Moneta's genealogy. Zarohen and Arfaxat are, as we have seen, at best the distant

⁴⁹Fuit enim quidam Paganus Pythagoras nomine, qui animas hominum in alia corpora, hominum, scilicet, vel pecudum intrare dixit, cui errori plures Pagani consenserunt, et dicti sunt Pythagorici, quos velut exordium suum Cathari, qui duo ponunt principia, imitantur. In hoc errore fuerunt etiam quidam alii perfidi, scilicet Zarden, et Arphaxat, qui dixerunt datorem legis Moysi esse Principem tenebrarum, a quibus omnes Cathari, quoad hunc errorem derivati sunt. Fuerunt etiam apud Iudaeos Saducaei, qui horum corporum resurrectionem negabant, a quibus omnes Cathari duxerunt originem. Fuit quidam alius Manes nomine qui duo principia posuit, et duas creationes, duasque naturas, unde Manichaei dicti sunt quidam, et ab istis quidam Catharorum sumpserunt principia. Item omnia visibilia, et transitoria asserebant a Diabolo fabricata, unde Christum negabant carnem istam sumpsisse de Virgine. Vetus autem testamentum respuunt, quos Cathari plurimum imitantur. Fuit etiam quidam Tatianus nomine, a quo Tatiani quidam dicti sunt, qui esum carnum reprobavit, quem Cathari imitantur. Item Valentiniani a Valentino, qui Christum dixit nihil de Virgine assumpsisse.' *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*, V: ii, 2 (Ricchini, p. 411).

memory of a long-dead religion, at worst entirely fictitious characters. Biblical figures such as the Sadducees or Hymenaeus and Philetus and the Nicolaitans were probably shadowy, semi-mythical figures by the thirteenth century. The very early sects mentioned here - the Marcionites, Cerinthians, Ebionites, Gnostics, Valentinians, Tatianians - would have undergone a similar process, whilst the arch-heresiarch Mani and his sect had long since passed into the realm of medieval legend. This genealogy is a bowdlerised version of the more precise and scholarly catalogues of heresy, reduced to the vestiges retained by popular memory. Nevertheless, the genealogy still stresses the doctrinal continuity between contemporary and former heretics. The continuity between the Cathars and early and even pre-Christian sects is most clearly pointed out by Moneta:

Having seen that the Roman Church derived from Christ as the head, I shall now show whence the Cathar Church originates. For just as it has been shown through the entirety of things believed by the Roman Church that that Church is the Church of Christ, so is it also shown by the entirety of things believed by them that their congregation is not the Church of God, neither did it derive its origin from him as the head, but rather from the Pagans, or the Jews, or the Christian Apostates.⁵⁰

Durand makes the same link, although not quite so explicitly, between the old and the new. In the *Liber antiheresis* the genealogy occurs in the section *De statu ecclesie*, in which there is no doubt as to the Cathars' ancestors (subsequently listed in the genealogy), from whom they took the errors and examples of their life.⁵¹ The version in the *Contra Manichaeos* appears in Chapter XIV devoted to Cathar teachings about creation. Here it is underlined that the Cathars, the *apostatici Manichei*, have deviated from the

⁵⁰'Viso, quod Ecclesia Romana a Christo velut capite sumpsit exordium, nunc unde Catharorum Ecclesia originem duxerit ostendamus. Sicut enim per universitatem creditorum ab Ecclesia Romana ostensum est, quod ipsa est Christi ecclesia, ita etiam per universitatem creditorum ab eis ostenditur, quod eorum congregatio non est Dei ecclesia, nec ab ipso velut capite sumpsit originem, sed potius a Paganis, aut Judaeis, aut apostatis Christianis.' *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*, V: ii, 2 (Ricchini, p. 411).

⁵¹Selge, vol. II, p. 96.

true faith of the Roman Church because they have taken up the distorted beliefs of former heretics.⁵²

Both approaches are found in the works of Stephen of Bourbon and Moneta of Cremona. Stephen, as we have seen, emphasises the recent origins of the Waldensians but adopts a different tactic when it comes to dealing with the Cathars, whose direct lineage from Mani he is careful to point out. Similarly with Moneta; having traced the Cathars' lineage back to ancient errors (and for this very reason condemned them as heretical), he turns this argument on its head when he comes to deal with the Waldensians. If the Cathars are heretics because they originate from ancient, non-Christian, roots, the Waldensians are heretics precisely because:

it is not many years since they began to exist, as it is patently clear that they originated from Valdes who came from the city of Lyons, who began this life not more than eighty years ago... Therefore they are not the successors of the primitive Church; therefore they are not the Church of God. And if they say that their way existed before Valdes, let them show it by some witness, which they cannot in the least do.⁵³

Both arguments, whether of ancient descent from a primeval error, or recent descent from a modern heresiarch, are equally valid for Moneta's purpose; either way the heretics are damned.

The fluid approach of Stephen and Moneta to the problem indicates the conflict inherent in polemicists' attempts to provide a cohesive explanation for the origins of heresy. It was difficult, on the one hand, for them to argue that the Cathars were of recent origin (and therefore not the true Church)

⁵²Thouzellier, *Une somme*, p. 237.

⁵³'non enim multum temporis est, quod esse coeperunt, quoniam sicut patet a Valdesio cive Lugdunensi exordium acceperunt, qui hanc viam incoepit, non sunt plures, quam octuaginta anni... Ergo non sunt successores Ecclesiae primitivae; Ergo non sunt Ecclesia Dei. Si autem dicunt, quod sua via ante Valdensem fuit, ostendant hoc aliquo testimonio, quod minime facere possunt.' *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*, V: i, 3 (Ricchini, p. 402.)

since anyone familiar with Augustine's writings readily picked up on the apparent links with dualism in general and Manicheism in particular. On the other hand, polemicists could not easily argue that the Waldensians - at least in the initial stages of their development - were manifestly unscriptural. The progression from the precise and detailed accounts of the origins of the Waldensians to the fantastic explanations of the origins of the Cathars contained in the last group of texts is striking. The contrast presents an intriguing problem in that the two types of explanations of the origins of heresy appear to be mutually incompatible. On the one hand stand the apparently factual, 'historical' accounts of the origins of various sects (primarily the Waldensians), on the other the mythical accounts of the origins of one particular sect (the Cathars). Furthermore, both these types of explanations provide their own grounds for convicting the sects with which they are dealing of heresy. Whilst the Cathars are heretical because they have taken up the errors of previous heretics, the Waldensians and other groups are heretical precisely because their origins lie in the recent past. The two positions appear to be diametrically opposed to each other. Was it descent from ancient error or novelty which was the distinguishing mark of heresy?

Various explanations for this contradiction can be put forward. Some concern the purpose and methods of medieval polemicists. It could be quite simply that the two groups of texts were attempting to achieve different aims: the historical accounts purely to describe the emergence of individual sects, the mythical accounts to explain why a particular sect emerged by showing where the historical roots of that sect lay. To put it another way, the former group of texts is dealing with the origins, and the latter with the causes, of heresy. In all cases, however, the primary purpose of the texts was to arm the reader with information which could be used in the intellectual

fight against heresy. That being the case, why did one group of authors tell their readers that heresy could be recognised by its novelty, and another group that heresy was distinguished by the antiquity of its errors? It could be that the contradiction is the result of the polemicists' principal dilemma, which was to define heresy in such a way as to provide grounds which would convict both the Cathars and the reformist sects of heresy. In the case of the Cathars there was very little problem. Not only were their doctrines manifestly unscriptural and contrary to the teaching of the Church, but it was also a simple matter to link Cathar doctrines and practices back to the Manicheans, the dualist sect with which medieval polemicists were most familiar. It was very much more difficult, particularly in the earlier period of the sect's history, to find doctrinal grounds for convicting the Waldensians of heresy, or to pinpoint any of their spiritual ancestors. This dilemma would account for the fact that all the 'historical' accounts deal with the Waldensians or other reformist sects, whilst all the 'mythical' accounts deal with the Cathars.

However, the boundaries between the two types of explanations are not quite so clear cut as that. Anselm of Alessandria's account, although undoubtedly containing a strong mythical element, is a semi-historical source. At the same time there are suggestions in some of the 'historical' accounts that their authors may have had more mythical preconceptions than appears at first glance. Bernard of Fontcaude, for instance, put forward a somewhat fantastic explanation for the name of the Waldensians which hinted at their supernatural nature:

the new heretics... were called *Valdenses*, doubtless from a dense valley, who had been assigned the name by a certain

presage of the future, because they surround themselves by the profound and dense darkness of errors.⁵⁴

Again, Ebrard of Béthune wrote that the Waldensians - or *Vallenses*, as he calls them - were so-called because they dwelt in a valley of tears.⁵⁵ Similar hints appear in the play made by Eckbert and Stephen on the similarity between the name Manes and the word *mania*. Stephen also no doubt saw Providence at work when he commented in his account of Waldensian origins that the man who translated books for Valdes had subsequently met a sudden death by falling off a roof.⁵⁶ The contradiction between the two types of explanation cannot therefore be entirely accounted for by the respective subjects of their attack. It cannot be explained chronologically, since both types cover much the same period. Nor can it be explained by the purpose of the author - handbooks for priests as distinct from inquisitors' manuals, for example. Both Bernard of Fontcaude and Eckbert, exponents of each type - 'historical' and 'mythical' of explanation, were writing practical handbooks for the use of parish priests. Bernard Gui's careful and sober texts contrast strongly with Anselm of Alessandria's mythical accounts, yet both were inquisitors writing manuals for the use of their colleagues. This is not a case of different approaches by different groups of people at different times.

What then is the explanation for the contradiction between the two approaches to the origins of heresy? Is the difference between the two more apparent than real? The answer is surely that both descent from ancient error and novelty are features of heresy. If we refer back to the definitions of heresy discussed in Ch. 1, it is quite clear that both characteristics can be

⁵⁴...novi heretici, qui quodam praesagio futurorum sortiti vocabulum, dicti sunt Valdenses; nimirum a Valle densa; eo quod profundis et densis errorum tenebris involvantur.' *Adversus Waldensium sectam*, Prologus: i (PL 204, 795).

⁵⁵*Liber antihaeresis*, XXV (MBVP², 1572).

⁵⁶*De septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, IV: 7, 342 (Lecoy de la Marche, p. 291).

contained within the same definition - see, for example, Bernard of Fontcaude's pronouncement that 'a heretic is he who either follows another's or an old heresy, or introduces a new one'. This is to a large extent sheer pragmatism; as we saw with Moneta and Stephen, polemicists were prepared to use whichever argument would convict the particular group with which they were dealing as heretical. And yet there is a sense in which both approaches were rooted in the same mindset, which saw contemporary heretics, even the Waldensians, as having an uninterrupted link with past heretics. There is firm evidence in the polemical literature that this is indeed the case. Medieval polemicists shared a common mindset which, when it looked at contemporary heretics, did not see individual and discrete sects but offshoots of the same 'plant'. Nor did this plant exist only in their own time; its roots, if only they could be traced back far enough, had existed from the inception of the Church.

Such a belief was nourished by the catalogues of heretics which medieval polemicists inherited from the early Church.⁵⁷ Even during their earliest history these catalogues were highly stylised and there was little variation from author to author. Medieval polemicists were probably most familiar with the catalogue of Augustine, which formed the first part of an incomplete work on the nature of heresy, and of Isidore of Seville. It was Isidore's catalogue which Gratian copied into his *Decretum* and which was in turn reproduced by Ebrard of Béthune,⁵⁸ Honorius Augustodunensis⁵⁹ and

⁵⁷See e.g. Philastrius, *De haeresibus liber*, (Oehler, vol. I, pp. 29-185); Augustine, *De haeresibus liber* (Oehler, vol. I, 195-255); Auctor Praedestinati, *De haeresibus* (Oehler, vol. I, 233-68); Pseudo-Tertullian, *Liber adversus omnes haereses* (Oehler, vol. I, 271-9); Pseudo-Jerome, *Indiculus de haeresibus* (Oehler, vol. I, 284-97); Isidore of Seville, *De haeresibus* (Oehler, vol. I, 103-310) & *Etymologiae* (PL 82, 298-305); Paul, *De haeresibus libellus* (Oehler, vol. I, 313-21); Honorius, *De haeresibus libellus* (Oehler, vol. I, 327-32). For discussion of these and other catalogues, see McClure, 'Handbooks Against Heresy in the West'.

⁵⁸*Liber antiheresis*, XXVI (MBVP² 24, 1574-47).

⁵⁹*Liber de haeresibus* (PL 172, 233-40).

Alvarus Pelagius.⁶⁰ This catalogue lists sixty-eight heretics, in more or less chronological order, the name of each heretic and his sect together with a brief description of his beliefs. Many of the sects contained in the list are well known (the Marcionites, Gnostics, Arians and Donatists, for instance), others are more obscure. Some - the Adamites, who were supposedly nudists, or the Luciferians, who were devil-worshippers - may well be mythical, at least in the medieval period.⁶¹ Although these particular medieval catalogues copy Gratian's list without attempting to bring the list up to date, their inclusion was still intended to help readers to identify contemporary heretics from descriptions of previous ones. Ebrard writes 'so that it may be recognised that the heretic has erred in the faith, let us set out the opinions of certain heretics'.⁶² A drastically reduced version of the catalogue made its way into the works of Anselm of Alessandria⁶³ and Pseudo-Reinerius.⁶⁴ Anselm merely lists the names of the heretics without giving any details, but, most unusually, brings his list up to date with the addition of the Cathars, Waldensians, Speronists, and the Arnaldists. These catalogues were a fundamental part of the conceptual framework within which medieval polemicists worked. So widespread was their influence that it was taken for

⁶⁰*Collyrium fidei* (Meneses, pp. 232-73).

⁶¹The Adamites were an early group of heretics, said to imitate the primitive nudity of Adam and to advocate sexual promiscuity, who were mentioned by Epiphanius and Augustine, possibly to be identified with the Carpocratians. The Luciferians are a somewhat obscure group, mentioned by Isidore, Augustine and Jerome, who describe them as the followers of a 4th-century anti-Arian bishop, Lucifer of Cagliari. How the subsequent association with devil-worship arose is not quite clear, unless from the name the medieval mind inferred that they must be devil-worshippers. The occurrence of both these groups in the catalogue of heresy transmitted by Isidore of Seville to Gratian meant that they were assumed to exist in the Middle Ages; however, their continued existence into this period is questionable. See Lerner, *Heresy of the Free Spirit*, pp. 25-34 for an evaluation of the beliefs and practices of the people who were accused of belonging to these two groups in the 14th century; his conclusion is that most of these people were actually Waldensians. See also dictionary entries in *DTC*.

⁶²'Ut autem haereticum errare in fide cognitum sit, quorundam haereticorum sententias in publicum proponamus.' *Liber antihaeresis*, XXVI (MBVP² 24, 1574).

⁶³*Tractatus de hereticis* (Dondaine, 'La hiérarchie II', pp. 323-24).

⁶⁴*Pseudo-Reinerius*, XXVI (Nickson, pp. 106-08).

granted that an uninterrupted line of heretics had existed since the inception of the Church. In view of this it is interesting to note that none of the polemicists, with the exception of Anselm of Alessandria, brought the catalogues up to date. From the polemical point of view this was not strictly necessary, since they were confident that contemporary heretics could be identified and classified through studying descriptions of the ancient heretics. Even in cases such as the Waldensians, where there were no visible historical connections to the ancient heretics, polemicists were quite convinced that those connections existed. That they could not be identified was the result of the heretics' inherently secretive and deceitful nature, which allowed them to lie hidden for centuries and suddenly reappear, as if from nowhere, at particular points in time. The catalogues therefore supported a concept of heresy in which all heretics were essentially alike and bound together by common historical and spiritual links.

This point of view is not confined to the catalogues of heresy, but is apparent elsewhere in the polemical literature. To the polemicists of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the New Testament contained specific verses which were tailor-made for their own heretics. Frequent reference was made to Paul's warning about the last days in his letters to Timothy. Ebrard of Béthune cites 1 Tim. 4: 1-5 and 2 Tim. 3: 1-8, and comments that Paul had encountered heretics and was speaking about them in these verses.⁶⁵ Ralph the Ardent explains that the verses from 1 Timothy refer to the present-day Manicheans.⁶⁶ For Alan of Lille, these verses had an even more direct connection with contemporary heretical movements. First he quotes the relevant verses from 2 Timothy:

⁶⁵*Liber antihaeresis* XXIII (MBVP² 24, 1568).

⁶⁶*Homilia*, XIX (PL 150, 2011).

*Hoc autem scito, quod in novissimis diebus instabunt tempora periculosa, et erunt homines seipsos amantes, cupidi, elati, superbi, blasphemantes, parentibus inobedientes, ingrati, scelesti, sine affectione, sine pace, criminatores, incontinentes, immites, sine benignitate, proditores, protervi, tumidi, voluptatum amatores magis quam Dei, habentes speciem quidem pietatis, virtutem autem ejus abnegantes; et hos devita: ex his enim sunt qui penetrant domos, et captivas ducunt mulierculas, oneratas peccatis, quae ducantur variis desideriis, semper discentes, et nunquam ad veritatis scientiam pervenientes.*⁶⁷

He then goes on to explain how the Waldensians display quite literally the 'carnal fruits' which these verses talk about:

All these verses are most of all applicable to the Waldensians, who are *haughty*, slandering the prelates of the Church; *proud*, glorying in their own works; *blasphemous* towards God through heresies, *disobedient* to physical and spiritual parents, because they deny obedience to their prelates; *wicked*, because they kill their souls and others with wicked doctrines; *without affection* for anyone, *without peace*, disturbing others, *accusers*, because they heap accusations on others; *incontinent*, they even gratify appetites in their conventicles, and turn their attention to luxuries, as is testified by those who have left their company; *fierce*, by pursuing quarrels, *without kindness*, because they refuse to help others; *treacherous*, because they reveal the secrets of others; *puffed-up* with a swollen heart, bold and impudent with profane religion, *having a certain appearance of piety, but denying its power*, because they pretend religion outwardly, but inwardly are ravening wolves; blind people who do not understand anything they say, nor with what they are dealing; lovers of passion, putting carnal delights above spiritual ones. These people are the ones *who enter the homes of widows* and deceive them; they are the ones who are always working in their schools, so that they can learn more, and they will never attain true knowledge.⁶⁸

⁶⁷*De fide catholica*, II: i (PL 210, 380).

⁶⁸Haec omnia maxime conveniunt Waldensibus, qui *elati* sunt, praelatis Ecclesiae detrahentes; *superbi*, propria opera jactantes; *blasphemi* in Deum per haereses, parentibus carnalibus et spiritualibus *inobedientes*, quia negant obedientiam praelatis suis; *scelesti*, quia suas animas et alias pravis dogmatibus interficiunt; *sine affectione* ad aliquem, *sine pace*, alios inquietantes, *criminatores*, quia aliis crimina imponunt; *incontinentes* tamen in conciliabulis [sic] suis gulae indulgent et luxuria intendunt, ut testantur illi qui a consortiis eorum recedunt; *immites*, exercendo lites; *sine benitate* [sic], quia subvenire aliis nolunt; *proditores*, quia secreta aliorum revelant; *tumidi* corde inflati, profana religione protervi et procaces, *speciem quidem pietatis habentes, virtutem autem ejus abnegantes*, quia extrinsecus religionem praetendunt, intrinsecus autem sunt lupi rapaces; caeci non intelligentes quid loquuntur, nec de quibus agunt; voluptatum amatores, carnales laetitia spiritualibus praeponentes. Isti sunt qui *penetrant domos viduarum* et eas decipiunt; his sunt qui semper laborant in gymnasiis

Guarnerius of Rochefort, writing shortly after Alan, used the same method to apply the identical verses to the Amalricians.⁶⁹ Peter Martyr, in writing about the various branches of the Predestinarians, was quite clear about the continuity of this sect with previous heretics:

For there are certain of them who say that everything good is predestined by the good god, but that everything evil is predestined by the devil; which error they took from Simon Magus and from the Manicheans who are said to have disseminated this wickedness. But others rave that everything below is ruled according to the motion and course of the stars and other heavenly bodies, even the soul itself when it is clothed with flesh. Also they add that the world is eternal and that Adam was not the first man. Which error they appear to have taken primarily from the words of Aristotle, as will be clear from their arguments below... But the fourth group consists of those who blaspheme that neither any angels nor the souls of men exist at the end of this life. The Sadducees were the first author of this stupidity, which afterwards was adopted by a certain person called Arabs who with his accomplices propounded the doctrine that the soul comes to an end with the flesh. A certain other person called Zeno with his disciples added that the soul will be destroyed a short interval after the destruction of the flesh.⁷⁰

It was fairly common, as has already been seen in the case of Bernard of Fontcaude, Eckbert of Schönau and Stephen of Bourbon, for polemicists to attribute a supernatural significance to the names of even those sects which

suis, ut addiscant, et nunquam ad scientiam veritatis pervenient'. *De fide catholica*, I: i (PL 210, 380). The italics appear in the text.

⁶⁹*Contra Amaurianos*, Prologus (Baümker, p. 1). On the Amalricians see Aegerter, *Les hérésies du moyen âge*, ch. 3; Dickson, 'The Burning of the Amalricians'.

⁷⁰'Sunt autem predestinatorum genera III^{or}. Quidam enim sunt qui dicunt bona omnia preordinata esse a deo bono, mala vero a diabolo cuncta; quem errorem traxerunt a Simone mago et a manicheis qui hanc perfidiam disseminasse leguntur. Alii vero delirant omnia inferiora regi secundum motum et cursum syderum aliorumque corporum superiorum, etiam animam ipsam dum tegitur carne. Addunt etiam quod mundus sit eternus et quod Adam non fuerit primus homo. Quem errorem videntur traxisse ex dictis Aristotelis maxime, prout inferius in suis allegationibus patebit... Quartum vero genus est illorum qui blasphemant non esse angelos aliquos neque animas hominum ista vita finita. Cuius auctores stultitie Saducei primo fuerunt, quam postea mutatus est quidam nomine Arabs qui domaticavit [sic] cum complicitibus suis animam cum carne finiri. Adiecit et quidam alius nomine Zeno cum discipulis suis quod post modicum intervallum carne perempta perimatur et anima.' *Contra hereticos*, 23 (Käppeli, pp. 331-32). Dondaine, 'Durand de Huesca', p. 266, n. 92, notes that a shortened form of this section was copied into an Italian manuscript of the 13th century.

had apparently taken their name from their historical founders. A similar example is found in Peter Martyr, who wrote that the Predestinarians were so-called 'because they say that everything happens just as it is preordained or predestined, not because they themselves are predestined to life but rather, I fear, because they are for the most part set down for death.'⁷¹ At the same time, however, there is a sense in which the particular names of individual sects had very little significance for the polemicists. One of the primary characteristics of the medieval polemic against heresy is the way in which it attached the ancient names to the medieval heresies. If nothing else this tendency is evident in the titles of polemical works. Durand of Huesca's *Liber contra Manicheos* comes to mind. The full title of Bernard of Fontcaude's treatise is the *Tractatus Bernardi abbatis Fontis Calidi contra Vallenses et contra Arrianos*.⁷² These titles indicate the two most frequent designations for heretics: *Manichaei* and *Arriani*.

It has been argued that *Manichaei* and *Arriani* were used with some justification and in a very precise manner. Thouzellier suggests that the former was applied to absolute, and the latter to the mitigated, dualists,⁷³ whilst Congar puts forward the view that the Cathars were called *Arriani* because of their denial of the divinity of Christ.⁷⁴ The thrust of Runciman's thesis is that those who described the Cathars as Manicheans *correctly* perceived that sect as a revival of the ancient heresy.⁷⁵ It is unlikely, however, that the application of these names was made with quite such

⁷¹'Dicuntur autem predestinati, quia dicunt omnia venire sicut sunt preordinata vel predestinata, non quia sint ipsi predestinati ad vitam, sed, ut timeo, potius sunt ad mortem ex parte maiori prescripti.' *Contra hereticos*, 23 (Käppeli, p. 331).

⁷²This is the title given in Gretser's edition of the treatise in his collection *Trias scriptorum adversus Waldensium sectam* (Ingolstadt, 1614).

⁷³'La profession trinitaire du Vaudois Durand de Huesca', p. 69, in *Hérésie et hérétiques*, pp. 53-79.

⁷⁴Congar, "'Arriana haeresis'", p. 456.

⁷⁵Runciman, *The Medieval Manichee*.

accuracy. As Grundmann has pointed out, there was a general tendency on the part of medieval polemicists - typified by Eckbert of Schönau - to label as Manichean any heresy which was vaguely dualist or which resembled Augustine's description of that heresy.⁷⁶

These phenomena were for them only the reality of the endless fight sustained by the devil against the Church of God, so that to their eyes some attitudes appeared only to be a reproduction of those which had manifested themselves in the past. They had learnt something about Manichean dualism from Augustine: consequently every form of dualism appeared to them to be of Manichean stock.⁷⁷

The Italian layman George, in his *Disputatio inter Catholicum et Paterinum haereticum*, often referred in exasperation to his Patarene opponent as a 'wicked Manichean'; and the chapter headings of this text are frequently labelled as 'the response of the Manichean' rather than 'the response of the Patarene'. Pseudo-Prevostin of Cremona wrote that 'this heretic is one who in former times is called a Manichean but who is now called a Cathar.'⁷⁸ Bernard Gui described the Cathars as the 'Manicheans of the present day' on more than one occasion.⁷⁹ The use of *Arriani* occurs much less frequently.⁸⁰ Bernard of Fontcaude's use of the term has already been noted; whilst Ebrard of Béthune also used the term to describe the Cathars.⁸¹ More unusually, Durand of Huesca referred on several occasions to the *moderni Marchionite*.⁸²

⁷⁶Grundmann, *Religiöse Bewegungen*, p. 24, n. 21.

⁷⁷'Ces phénomènes n'étaient pour eux que des faits de la lutte sans fin soutenue par le démon contre l'Église de Dieu, de sorte qu'à leurs yeux, des attitudes semblables à celles qui s'étaient manifestées dans les passé n'en étaient que la reproduction. Ils avaient appris par saint Augustin quelque chose du dualisme manichéen: toute forme de dualisme leur apparaissait en conséquence comme de souche manichéenne'. Dondaine, 'L'origine', p. 48.

⁷⁸'Hereticus autem qui hoc dicit antiquitus Manicheus, nunc vero Catharus appellatur.' *Summa contra haereticos*, I (Garvin & Corbett, p. 4).

⁷⁹Bernard Gui, *Practica inquisitionis*, I: 1 (Mollat, vol. I, p. 10).

⁸⁰Congar and Manselli count 14 such instances in various chronicles, letters and heresiological works from the 11th to the 12th centuries. Cf. Congar, "'Arriana haeresis'", pp. 449-450 & Manselli, 'Una designazione dell'eresia catara', pp. 233-46.

⁸¹E. g. Ebrard of Béthune, *Liber antihaeresis*, III (MBVP² 24, 1534).

⁸²*Contra Manicheos*, XIV (Thouzellier, *Une somme*, pp. 239 & 303).

In all of these examples the application is somewhat haphazard. Although the terms *Manichaei* and *Arriani* are apparently very specific and technical terms, which refer to particular sects holding particular doctrines, they may not have had the same resonance to the medieval mind. Moreover polemicists may have had good reason to resort to these descriptions even if they were not entirely appropriate to the sect in question. In the first instance contemporaries were sometimes at a loss as to what to call the new sects, unless there was a specific heresiarch from whom a name could be derived, as in the case of the Waldensians. Thus Bernard of Clairvaux, who wrote in his sermons *Super Cantica Canticorum*:

Ask them who the author of their sect is: they will give the name of no man. What heresy has not had its own heresiarch from among men? The Manicheans had Mani as founder and teacher, the Sabellians Sabellius, the Arians Arius, the Eunomians Eunomius, the Nestorians Nestorius. So with all other plagues of this kind, each one was known to have a single man as master, from whom they took both their origin and name. What name or title could you accord to these people?⁸³

Under these circumstances it was only natural to turn to the ancient characters which loomed largest in the medieval psyche: the arch-heretics Mani and Arius. More importantly, it was simpler and more effective for polemicists to warn the populace away by giving the sects familiar labels which instantly marked out the adherents of those sects as heretics, than it was to explain to the laity exactly why a life of voluntary poverty, for instance, was heretical. Furthermore, even if such labels had been unfamiliar, it could be explained that these ancient heresies had already been

⁸³'Quaere ab illis suae sectae auctorem: neminem hominem dabunt. Quae haeresis non ex hominibus habuit proprium haeresiarcham? Manichaei Manem habuere principem et praeceptorem, Sabelliani Sabellium, Ariani Arium, Eunomiani Eunomium, Nestoriani Nestorium. Ita omnes ceterae huiusmodi pestes, singulae singulos magistros, homines habuisse noscuntur, a quibus originem simul duxere et nomen'. *Super Cantica*, 66: 1, 2 (Leclercq, Talbot, Rochais, vol. II, p. 179).

condemned by the Church and so, according to the definitions of heresy, any new sect which could be shown to hold the same beliefs was instantly and effortlessly convicted as heretical.

There was little doubt in the minds of polemicists that the new heresies were merely a visible recrudescence of the ancient heresies which had lain dormant for centuries. As Pseudo-David of Augsburg put it:

And although the old heretics such as the Arians and the Pelagians and the Manicheans and others, who openly attacked the faith, were confounded through the wisdom of the holy ones, they have risen up in a new way, creeping around secretly in corners, pouring the more harmful poison of error into the simple... This is the road which the devil now prepares, so that he might furtively destroy, after his open war has been completely defeated.⁸⁴

This conviction was not founded so much on a specific doctrinal correlation between the old and the new heresies (although as the sources show, polemicists did see some of the medieval heresies as having taken up ancient errors), but on a perceived common tendency to disrupt the peace and faith of the members of the Church. All the accounts of the origins of heresy, whether 'historical' or 'mythical', rest on the belief that the continuity between the old and the new heresies was due to their intrinsic nature, which had remained unchanged throughout the centuries. The reason that the new heresies could not be given a name, explained Bernard of Clairvaux, was because their origin lies in the delusions of demons rather than of men:

Their heresy is not of man, nor did they receive it through man; although it is far from the case that they received it through

⁸⁴'Et quia sicut Arii et Pelagii et Manicheorum [sic] et aliorum [sic] per sapientiam sanctorum contrite sunt, qui aperte fidem impugnauerunt, surrexerunt nove, latenter in angulis serpentes, nocivius venenum erroris simplicibus infundentes... Has enim vias nunc preparat dyabolus, ut furtive perimat, postquam aperta eius bella sunt devicta.' *De inquisitione hereticorum*, 2 (Preger, p. 204-05).

Jesus Christ, but more without doubt, as the Holy spirit predicted, through the promptings and frauds of demons...⁸⁵

It was this diabolical origin which above all united seemingly disparate groups such as the Cathars and the Waldensians, and which made heretics as a body so intrinsically different from 'normally' dissenting members of the institutional Church.

⁸⁵Quoniam non est ab homine illorum haeresis, neque per hominem illam acceperunt; absit tamen ut per revelationem Iesu Christi, sed magis et absque dubio, uti Spiritus Sanctus praedixit, per immissionem et fraudem daemoniorum...' *Super Cantica*, 66: 1, 2 (Leclercq, Talbot, Rochais, vol. II, p. 179).

Chapter Five

THE TWO CHURCHES

Chs 1 and 2 outlined the principal characteristics of the medieval concept of heresy and the heretic; Ch. 3 examined the supposed causes of heresy as they were conceived by polemicists. All of these present a basic, if well worked out, concept of heresy. In Ch. 4, however, we began to see how the concept of heresy could operate on a further level. The 'historical' accounts of the origins of heresy fit in well with the standard concept of heresy outlined the first three chapters - indeed, much of the evidence used in those chapters was taken from those same 'historical' accounts. Examination of the 'mythical' accounts, however, showed that the concept of heresy contains another layer of meaning. Ch. 4 concluded that both these types of accounts were held together by a common mindset which viewed all heretics as being united by their intrinsic nature. The prevailing concept of heresy concentrated on the personal characteristics which heretics held in common, such as spiritual pride. This meant that the attention was focused on the heretic primarily as a particular kind of person, but these characteristics did not in themselves turn an individual into a heretic. Heretics were not simply a group of otherwise diverse people who happened to share certain personal characteristics and whose heresy had obvious and easily defined causes. Their unity lay much deeper than that. The common nature in which, according to medieval polemicists, all heretics past and present participated was fundamentally diabolical. Heretics were quite simply united by their allegiance to the Devil, an unholy relationship which tainted every aspect of their being. It was the combination of the heretic's diabolical nature with the

concentration on the heretic as a particular kind of person (not only in the sense of their personal attributes, but in the sense of being intrinsically different from 'normal' human beings) which rendered the medieval heretic such a deadly enemy. Grundmann sums up the position of the heretic as follows:

The heretic stands within the Augustinian view of the *civitas diaboli*, within the eschatological view of the Antichrist. According to this order the heretic is not only shut out from the community of believers, but is also characterised at the same time by a particular quality, just as the Bible and the Fathers had described them as apostates from the kingdom of God and children of the Antichrist.¹

Here are identified the two essential elements of the conceptual framework within which the medieval concept of heresy operated: Augustine's notion of the *civitas dei* and *civitas diaboli*² and the heretic's traditional association with the Devil. Neither of these were new concepts, but the increasing sense of the 'otherness' of the heretic, together with changes in ideas about the Devil, combined to give them a new force.

Augustine's scheme divided humanity into the members of two cities.³ His model of the *civitas dei* envisaged both an earthly and a spiritual level to the same body, which was comprised of angels and of all the predestined. The antithesis of this was the *civitas terrena* (alternatively the *civitas diaboli*) which

¹'...der Ketzler steht innerhalb der augustinischen Anschauungen auf der Seite der *civitas diaboli*, innerhalb der eschatologischen Anschauungen auf der Seite des Antichrists. Nach dieser Ordnung ist er nicht nur aus der Gemeinschaft der Gläubigen ausgeschlossen, sondern zugleich mit bestimmten Eigenschaften gekennzeichnet, wie sie die Bibel und die Patres für die Abtrünnigen vom Gottesreich und die Jünger des Antichrist geprägt haben'. 'Der Typus', p. 315.

²For this I have followed Barr, 'The Two Cities in Saint Augustine'; Ladner, *The Idea of Reform*, pp. 239-56; Robertson, *Regnum Dei*, pp. 206-16.

³Augustine's immediate source for such a division is Tyconius, who taught that the Universal Church was a true *ecclesia mixta*, comprising the cities of both God and the Devil. See Barr, 'The Two Cities', p. 211, n. 3; Ladner, *The Idea of Reform*, pp. 259-63. The origins of the idea, however, predate Tyconius, for which see Ladner, *The Idea of Reform*, pp. 242-48. Ladner also suggests a neglected but perhaps more obvious source for the idea of the two cities in the Pauline concept of the old and new man (*The Idea of Reform*, pp. 264-66).

was made up of fallen angels - in other words demons - and the reprobate. Satan himself is the ruler and king of this city, just as Christ is the ruler and king of the city of God. The two cities are, of course, utterly opposed to each other in their nature and characteristics.⁴ The chief end of the members of the *civitas diaboli* is to persecute the *civitas dei*, but 'Really the most deadly persecution the devil and all his hellish minions launch is that against the Faith itself, by inspiring heresy'.⁵ Medieval polemicists certainly drew on Augustine's idea of the two cities. Hugh of Amiens, for instance, described the 'present and temporal Church' in classically Augustinian terms as the 'hall' from which the 'heavenly and blessed Jerusalem' was entered.⁶ It is important to stress that for Augustine, the two cities were not merely concepts; they were metaphors for real entities. Polemicists inherited this distinction, although for them it was the physical existence of the *civitas diaboli* which loomed largest. The fundamental element of Augustine's concept of heresy was 'the fact of constituting, in the face of the legitimate Church, a distinct, individual grouping, implacable against the visible unity of the *Catholica*...'⁷ This view of heretics as forming an autonomous community passed directly into the medieval polemical tradition and, whether articulated or not, was the principal starting point for the polemical analysis of the origins of heresy.

Grundmann is undoubtedly correct in pointing to the *civitas dei/diaboli* typology as the foundation of the theoretical framework of the concept of heresy, but in the medieval polemic against heresy membership of the

⁴See Barr, 'The Two Cities', pp. 222-23 for a summary of the main contrasts between the two.

⁵Barr, 'The Two Cities', p. 216.

⁶*De ecclesia*, I: x (PL 192, 1265).

⁷'Pour Augustin l'élément fondamental paraît être le fait de constituer en face de l'Eglise légitime, un groupement distinct, individualisé, irréductible à l'unité visible de la *Catholica*...' de Guibert, 'La notion d'hérésie chez Saint Augustin', p. 382.

diabolical Church attained a new significance through the changes in ideas about the Devil which had taken place since Augustine's time.⁸ Cohn points to the shift away from the optimism and 'sublime self-confidence' of the early Church which believed that the faith of any Christian was proof against the limited powers of the Devil. Although theologians from Augustine to Aquinas had essentially regarded evil as non-being, such theological distinctions found little currency within the laity and those members of the Church hierarchy - especially the episcopal hierarchy - who were having to deal on a practical level with heretics.⁹ For them, evil took on a concrete reality in the form of the Devil and his human agents. By the later Middle Ages, demons 'had become far more powerful and menacing, and they were also far more closely involved in the lives of individual Christians'.¹⁰ Demons could manipulate people through their moral weaknesses, or physically possess them, in their efforts to prevent proper religious observance and attention to the Faith; and by far their greatest weapon in this direction was to create schisms and heresies.

'Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour'. (1 Pet. 5: 8) Never had Christians taken this warning so seriously or so literally. Berthold of Regensburg wrote of the Cathars: 'for their heresy is not of men, but without doubt, as the Holy spirit proclaimed, by the instigation of demons'.¹¹ Some polemicists were even more specific in their accusations of devil-worship, incest, and cannibalism. Such accusations were identical to those which the Church Fathers had made against the early

⁸Russell provides a splendid survey of the history of the concept of the Devil: *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity*; *Satan: the Early Christian Tradition*; *Lucifer: the Devil in the Middle Ages*. See also Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, ch. 2.

⁹Mora, 'Reification of Evil', pp. 37-38.

¹⁰Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, p. 24.

¹¹'quoniam non est ab homine illorum heresis, sed absque dubio, ut Spiritus sanctus predixit, per immissionem demoniorum'. Sermon 30 (Schönbach, p. 45).

heretics, and which had been levelled before that at the Christians themselves by pagan authorities.¹² When one of the earliest recorded incidents of heresy in the medieval west at Orléans in 1022 was described, the traditional accusations of devil-worship, orgy, incest, infanticide and cannibalism resurfaced, initially in Ademar of Chabannes' *Chronicle*, but much more prominently in the later account of Paul of Saint-Père de Chartres. Alan of Lille, although giving the usual derivation of Cathar from the Greek *katharos* (in its Latin form *castus*), meaning pure, also said that the name Cathar came from *catus*, vulgar Latin for cat, because in their secret meetings the Cathars would kiss the genitals of a cat, in which form Lucifer appeared to them.¹³ The same charge reappears in the anonymous fourteenth century treatise *Errores haereticorum*.¹⁴ Bernard of Clairvaux said that heretics committed 'nefarious and obscene acts in secret; just as the hindquarters of foxes stink'.¹⁵ In an appendix to his treatise, Benedict of Alignan points out the falseness of the apparent martyrdom of those heretics who go not merely peacefully but joyfully to their deaths. These people are not only spiritually but physically sustained by the Devil, who gives them the supernatural powers with which they are able to withstand the agony of torture and the flames.¹⁶ The picture which Benedict gives in this extract is one of people who are quite literally possessed and controlled by the Devil.

¹²For the sources for these early accusations see McGowan, 'Eating People', pp. 416-23; Grundmann, 'Der Typus', p. 323, n. 33. Russell & Wyndham, 'Witchcraft and the Demonization of Heresy' traces the development of these accusations from their pagan roots to their application against witches by the end of the 15th c. Grundmann similarly notes that these traditions culminated in the 'horrible illusions' of witchcraft at the end of the middle ages ('Der Typus', p. 326). See also Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, ch. 1 & chs. 3-4 *passim*.

¹³*De fide catholica*, I: lxiii (PL 210, 366).

¹⁴Döllinger, *Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte*, vol. II, p. 293.

¹⁵*Super Cantica*, 65: I, 2 (Leclercq, Talbot, Rochais, p. 173).

¹⁶Douais, 'Cinq pièces inédites', pp. 369-70.

Russell and Wyndham consider that 'It is a plausible hypothesis that libertine practices did in fact occur and that they were then embroidered by chroniclers and inquisitors to fit the pattern of the Fathers' attacks upon the early gnostics',¹⁷ but Grundmann argues more convincingly that the reality of 'ancient mysteries and cults, religious communities with sexual rituals, child sacrifices and magic effects' had died with the ancient world. Catholicism had preserved the details of the traditions long after the substance of the charges had ceased to be a reality.¹⁸ Lerner also doubts the veracity of similar accusations which were made against the elusive Free Spirits.¹⁹ It does not seem at all probable that these accusations were true; at the very most they can only ever have been fantastic exaggerations containing perhaps a grain of truth. More importantly, Russell and Wyndham argue that the Church Fathers applied the demonic stories to the Gnostics, and consequently that the stories were only applied to medieval sects which appeared dualist in nature - suggesting that the Cathars were a particular target for this type of accusation. While it is certainly true that most of the specific charges of orgy and so on are made against the Cathars, in the minds of polemicists other sects were still guilty, if only by association - Pseudo-David of Augsburg being a rare exception when he refuted charges of devil-worship made against the Waldensians.²⁰ Ebrard of Béthune, by contrast, told the Waldensians 'you are the beast with two horns, resembling a sheep, speaking like a dragon: And you worship the first beast, whose

¹⁷Russell & Wyndham, 'Witchcraft and the Demonization of Heresy', p. 15.

¹⁸'Der Typus', p. 326.

¹⁹*Heresy of the Free Spirit*, ch. 1.

²⁰'Quod autem, ut dicitur, osculentur ibi catos vel ranas vel videant dyabolum, vel extinctis lucernis pariter fornicentur, non puto istius esse secte, nec aliquod horum veraciter intellexi ab illis, quibus fidem adhiberem.' *De inquisitione hereticorum*, 10 (Preger, pp. 210-11).

snare of death has been healed, that is, the devil, or the Antichrist.²¹ By the end of the twelfth century, it 'had become a commonplace that the Devil, or a subordinate demon, presided over the nocturnal orgies of heretics in the form of an animal, usually a cat. And this belonged not to the folklore of the illiterate majority, but, on the contrary, to the worldview of the intellectual elite; learned clerics who stood at the very centre of affairs were thoroughly convinced of it'.²²

As McGowan points out, such stories tell us much more about the conception which the accuser held of the accused than they do about the customs of a particular group.²³ The Patristic stories of devil-worship and sexual depravity, resuscitated and reapplied to medieval heresies, reinforced the Augustinian notion of the *civitas dei / diaboli* and heightened the antithesis between the two bodies. In the polemical tradition, however, the model was not of two cities but of two churches. This was not a concept which was confined to polemical thought. Orthodox and heretic alike thought of humanity in terms of two invisible communities, one holy and one evil. Bishop Otto of Freising's *Chronicle of Universal History* was based around this scheme. Reinerius Sacconi and Bernard Gui reported that the concept existed amongst the Cathars, with the predictable difference that here the Cathar Church was considered the true Church, whilst the Roman Church was the diabolical Church.²⁴ It is curious, therefore, that polemicists do not discuss the concept more fully: in their literature it is an elusive theme which is rarely made explicit. It is true that the most natural place to deal with the

²¹'Vos quidem estis bestia habens duo cornua, similia agni, loquens sicut draco: Et facitis adorare bestiam primam, cuius curata est plaga mortis, id est, diabolum, sive Antichristum.' *Liber antihaeresis*, XXIII (MBVP² 24, 1568).

²²Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, p. 40.

²³'Eating People', p. 415.

²⁴Reinerius Sacconi, *Summa de Catharis*, De communibus opinionibus Catharorum (Sanjek, pp. 42-3); Bernard Gui, *Practica inquisitionis* (Mollat, vol. I, p. 10).

concept would be in discussions on the nature of the Church. On the other hand it may be that the concept was so fundamental, such a basic component of the conceptual framework within which heresy was discussed, that any further elaboration was unnecessary. Not only the problems which the polemical analysis of the origins of heresy raise, but also all the elements of the concept of heresy which have been dealt with so far - the way in which heretics were characterised as a particular kind of person, as being motivated by demonic forces, as being beyond both the institutional Church's and society's control - force us towards the conclusion that heretics were visualised as forming a separate community which, far from being a wayward subdivision of the institutional Church, was an autonomous body which opposed that Church in every facet of its nature and operation. This was not a notion unique to the medieval polemicists,²⁵ but as the elements of the concept of heresy mentioned above were stressed at the expense of the canonical definition of heresy, the image of heresy as a *corpus diaboli* took on a life of its own. Whether or not this image is described in terms of a two-churches typology, it became the fundamental belief upon which the polemical concept of heresy was based.

There are scattered instances in which traces of this belief are apparent. In Bernard of Fontcaude's treatise, for instance, he describes the Church as being at the same time both the *convocatio fidelium* and the *congregatio malorum*, as well as the physical house of God. The idea of the Church as the *convocatio fidelium* he notes as deriving from Philemon 2: 'Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and brother Timothy, to our beloved and fellow-helper Philemon, and to our beloved sister Apphia, and to our fellow-soldier

²⁵Callahan, 'Ademar of Chabannes', pp. 27-28, notes that a similar idea about a congregation of heretics, Jews, pagans and Saracens, opposed to the Catholic Church, is found in Ademar's thought.

Archippus, and to the Church which is in your house'. For the existence of the *congregatio malorum* he refers to Psalm 25: 5 - 'I have hated the church of the wicked'.²⁶ Here are the beginnings of the idea of two churches which is later made explicit by Moneta of Cremona. Hugh of Amiens also envisaged two communities although he talked of these in terms of cities, rather than churches. Hugh describes the Church of God in terms of the *civitas dei* mentioned in Psalm 87: 3 ('Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God').²⁷ This city is founded on the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the eucharist. Although Hugh does not specifically talk about a *civitas diaboli* its existence is implicit in his frequent descriptions of those who are outwith the city of God (the true light) as living in a realm of darkness or an abyss which is clearly the antithesis of the *civitas dei*. From this dark abyss 'the impious emerge, the schismatics flow, the heretics declaim' - the implication being that the heretics are on the top rung of this hierarchy of wickedness as well as the bottom of the abyss. The inhabitants of the abyss neither worship God nor obey their fathers; worse, they disperse perverse dogma and rage against the sacraments of the Church with their arguments.²⁸ The three sacraments which constitute the *civitas dei* are the antidote to the characteristics of the inhabitants of the abyss: they remove the ignorance of the impious, abolish the error of schismatics and repel heresy.²⁹

The most explicit reference to the theme of the two churches is made by Moneta of Cremona in his *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*. Book V of this

²⁶*Adversus Waldensium sectam*, XII: x (PL 204, 837).

²⁷*De ecclesia*, I: v (PL 192, 1260).

²⁸*De ecclesia*, I: x (PL 192, 1266).

²⁹*De ecclesia*, I: v (PL 192, 1260).

work, devoted to a discussion of the nature of the Church,³⁰ begins as follows:

The Church is found in this world in two ways, according to the witness of the Scriptures, one is the Church of the holy, which can be read about in Psalm 149. v. 1. *Sing to the Lord a new song, his praises in the Church of the holy ones.* The second is the Church of the wicked, about which it is read that the Holy Spirit has spoken through David in Psalm 25. v. 5. *I have hated the Church of the wicked.*³¹

Moneta posits the existence of a holy Church (*ecclesia sanctorum*) and a diabolical Church (*ecclesia malignantium*). For the diabolical Church he cites the same verse from the Psalms as does Bernard of Fontcaude. A virtually identical section appears in the third part of Benedict of Alignan's *Tractatus fidei*, also a discussion on the nature of the Church:

Note that the Church exists in the world in two ways. One is [the church] of the holy ones, about which the Psalms [speak]: his praises in the Church of the holy ones. The other is [the church] of the wicked ones about which the Psalms [speak]: I have hated the church of the wicked.³²

The origins of these two churches are quite clear. Both began at the time of Christ and the establishment of his Church (although Augustine traced their origins back much further than this). The ultimate founders of each were naturally the Holy Spirit and the Devil; the view that the ultimate origin of heresy was the Devil being inherited from the early Fathers.³³ Thus Hugh of

³⁰Moneta's treatment of this subject is fully discussed in Timko, 'The Ecclesiology of Moneta of Cremona's "Adversus Catharos et Valdenses"', ch. 5.

³¹'...quod duplex Ecclesia invenitur in mundo isto, secundum attestationem Scripturarum, una est Ecclesia Sanctorum, de qua legitur in Psalmo 149, v. 1. Cantate Domino canticum novum laus ejus in Ecclesia Sanctorum. Secunda est Ecclesia Malignantium, de qua legitur Spiritum Sanctum per David dixisse in Psalmo 25. v. 5. Odivi Ecclesiam malignantium'. *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses* V: i (Ricchini, p. 389).

³²'No[ta] q[uod] duplex est ecc[les]ia in hoc mu[n]do: una e[st] s[an]c[t]orum de qua Ps[almus]: laus eius i[n] ecc[les]ia s[an]c[t]orum. Alia e[st] maligna[n]tiu[m] de q[ua] Ps[almus]: odivi ecc[les]iam maligna[n]tiu[m]'. *Tractatus fidei*, f. 266^v.

³³le Boulluec, *La notion d'hérésie dans la littérature grèque*, vol. I, pp. 29-31; Brosch, *Das Wesen der Häresie*, pp. 50-62. Cohen, 'A Virgin Defiled', *passim*, points out that this view was not confined to the Fathers, but was also held by their Rabbinic contemporaries.

Amiens wrote that whilst the true Church derived from the Holy Spirit, 'who has marked the way, the truth and the life for us', and 'inspired sound doctrine', the *ecclesia malignantium* was created and sustained by 'Satan, the spirit of wickedness, who has delivered error, and heresy and the death of the world...' The *ecclesia sanctorum* was founded on the truth, but the *ecclesia malignantium* was founded on and inextricably bound up with lying and deceit:

Satan is the source of lying, the origin of sin, who was made good by the great creator, but in his perversity, by his own will, through his fall of pride, he soon found for himself and in himself the greed of robbery, the sordidness of idolatry, where he said; *I will make my throne with the north wind, I will be like the Most High*. (Isaiah 14: 14). It was not for him to put a throne there for himself, take possession of the north wind, strive for the likeness of the Most High. *I will make my throne*, behold pride; *with the winds*, behold robbery; *I will be like the Most High*, behold idolatry. See the ruin of the wicked. He did not hold his will, which he owed to God who made him from nothing, for God, but kept it as his own for himself. He gave birth to lying from his own resources: about this the truth says: *When he speaks a lie, he speaks about himself* (John 8: 44), for he is a liar and the father of it, that is of lies, that father is a liar, the father of lies, he formed an idol out of lying.³⁴

In Hugh's treatise Satan takes on all the typical characteristics - pride, deceit, idolatry, greed - which were so much part of the medieval concept of the heretic:

And the darkness, it says, was upon the face of the abyss (Gen. 1: 2). Satan was created the morning star by God, clearer and more lofty, having immediately been corrupted by his own will, being proud with presumption, blind with greed, from the height he became the abyss, from the light to the darkness; the

³⁴Satanas fons mendacii, origo peccati, a bono conditore bonus conditus, sed mox propria voluntate perversus invenit sibi apud se casum superbiae, cupiditatem rapinae, sordem idololatriae, ubi ait; *Ponam sedem meam ad aquilonem, ero similis Altissimo* (Isai, XIV, 14). Non erat ejus sedem sibi ponere, aquilonem occupare, similitudinem Altissimi affectare. *Ponam sedem meam*, ecce superbia; *ad aquilonem*, ecce rapina; *ero similis Altissimo*, ecce idolotria. Vide ruinam impii. Voluntatem suam quam Deo debuit, qui eum de nihilo fecit, non Deo, sed sibi propriam tenuit. A proprio isto mendacium genuit: de hoc veritas ait: *Cum loquitur mendacium, de propriis loquitur* (Joan. VIII, 44), mendax est enim et pater ejus, hoc est mendacii [sic], pater iste mendax, pater mendacii, mendacio idolum formavit.' *De ecclesia*, I: vi (PL 192, 1261).

darkness sent forth the storms of his presumptions, fastened the bonds of cupidity, fashioned the disgrace of desire. From the mists of those darkneses the nights of error and the storms of iniquity were created...³⁵

From this 'abyss of malignant lies' erupted all the evils of impiety, schism and heresy against which Hugh is writing.

There were foreshadowings of both churches before their inception. There were foreshadowings of the true Church before Christ - Moneta and Benedict, for instance, discuss the idea of *ecclesia ab Abel*, in which Abel, the first man to remain just without interruption, is held to be the founder of the Church (a position from which his father Adam, although created just, was barred, since he did lapse into sin).³⁶ From this it follows that the true Church may contain the forerunners of true Christians, such as the just of the Old Testament.³⁷ Similarly there were foreshadowings of heretics in certain pagans and apostates. As we saw in the previous chapter, Moneta of Cremona believed that the Cathar heresy was derived from pagans and Jews as well as apostate Christians,³⁸ and the 'genealogy' of heresy contained in the works of Durand of Huesca, Moneta of Cremona and Benedict of Alignan traces the spiritual descent of Catharism back to Pythagoras. Uniquely amongst the medieval catalogues of heresy, Ebrard of Béthune includes the *Epicuræi* and the *Pythagoræi* in his list (although not too much

³⁵'*Et tenebrae, inquit, erant super faciem abyssi* (Gen. I, 2). Satanæ ille lucifer a Deo conditus, clarior et excelsus statim voluntate propria depravatus, praesumptione superbus, cupiditate caecatus, de excelso factus est abyssus, de luminoso tenebrosus; tenebrae ejus praesumptionum procellas emittunt, cupiditatum laqueos innectunt, libidinum turpitudines faciunt. Ex earum nebulis tenebrarum creantur noctes errorum, et tempestas iniquorum...' *De ecclesia*, I: vi (PL 192, 1261).

³⁶Moneta of Cremona, *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*, V: ii (Ricchini, p. 408); Benedict of Alignan, *Tractatus fidei*, f. 266^v. For the early history of this idea, see Congar, '*Ecclesia ab Abel*'; some discussion in Oberman, *Forerunners of the Reformation*, pp. 19-22; 24-26. Dahan, '*L'exégèse de l'histoire de Caïn et Abel*' gives a survey of the exegetical history of the Cain and Abel story.

³⁷Moneta of Cremona, *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*, V: ii (Ricchini, p. 408).

³⁸Moneta of Cremona, *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*, V: II, 2 (Ricchini, p. 411).

weight should be put on this as an example of pre-Christian heresy, since both groups continued into the Christian era and were refuted by the early Christian Fathers).³⁹ The *Summa contra hereticos* attributed to Peter Martyr linked certain Predestinarian errors to Aristotle and Zeno.⁴⁰ More frequently Jewish heretics are described, a tradition which derives primarily from Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*, in which his catalogue of Christian heresies is preceded by a list of Jewish heretics including amongst others the Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes and Samaritans.⁴¹ This section is reproduced by Honorius Augustodunensis.⁴² Ebrard of Béthune also notes that two kinds of heretics, namely the Sadducees and Pharisees, were to be found among the Jews.⁴³ Jewish heresies reappeared amongst later heretics: Peter Martyr, for instance, ascribed a Predestinarian heresy about angels to the Sadducees.⁴⁴ The fact is, however, that these figures cannot be described as the first heretics. It is true that many espoused beliefs which in the Christian era were held to be heresies, but to say that they bequeathed their beliefs to later heretical groups is not to say that they themselves were heretics. Moreover, none of them qualifies as heretics in the true sense. Figures such as Pythagoras and Aristotle, or groups like the Sadducees and Pharisees, do not bear the typical marks of the medieval heretic. Most importantly, they are all figures which were openly opposed to the Church and which lack the essential characteristics of secrecy and deceit. They are typological foreshadowings of the *ecclesia malignantium*, which strictly speaking could not come into existence until the true Church, the *ecclesia sanctorum*, was established by

³⁹*Liber antihaeresis*, XXVI (MBVP² 24, 1575).

⁴⁰*Contra hereticos*, II: 23 (Käppeli, pp. 331-32).

⁴¹*Etymologiae*, VIII: iv (PL 82, 297-8).

⁴²*Liber de haeresibus* (PL 172, 235).

⁴³*Liber antihaeresis*, XXVI (MBVP², 24, 1574).

⁴⁴*Contra hereticos* II, 23 (Käppeli, p. 332).

Christ who is the root of the *ecclesia sanctorum*, and who comes alive in the hearts of the members of this Church through faith.⁴⁵

While the ultimate origins of the churches were to be found in the work of the Holy Spirit and the Devil, each of these had apparently established a human representative from whom the churches derived.⁴⁶ The *ecclesia sanctorum* was established by Christ on the human rock of Simon Peter, whilst most of the sources agree in singling out one figure as the founding member of the *ecclesia malignantium* and thus the first heretic: Simon Magus, the Samaritan who according to Acts 8: 9-24 was baptised by Philip and tried to buy the power of the Holy Spirit from the Apostles Peter and John.⁴⁷ That Simon Magus was universally recognised by both early and medieval polemicists as the first heretic is indisputable. In particular, Justin Martyr's identification of Simon as not only the first heretic, but also as 'the father of all heresies' was highly influential, being adopted by Irenaeus and successive generations of polemicists. Following the Patristic tradition all except one of the medieval catalogues of heresy place Simon at the head of the list, the only exception being Ebrard of Béthune's *Liber antiheresis*, which somewhat randomly takes out some of the heretics in Gratian's original catalogue and

⁴⁵Moneta of Cremona, *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*, V: i (Ricchini, p. 389).

⁴⁶Cohn first detects the idea that Satan worked through human collaborators in Jewish apocalyptic thought, particularly in some of the Dead Sea literature. *Europe's Inner Demons*, p. 19.

⁴⁷For introductory dictionary articles see Amann, 'Simon le magicien'; Blowers, 'Simon Magus'; McCasland, 'Simon Magus'; G. Salmon, 'Simon Magus'. For secondary literature on the early history of Simon Magus see Beyschlag, *Simon Magus und die christliche Gnosis*; Casey, 'Simon Magus'; Cerfaux, 'La gnose simonienne'; Filoramo, *A History of Gnosticism*, ch. 9; Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion*, ch. 4; Lüdemann, *Untersuchungen zur simonischen Gnosis*; Mansel, *The Gnostic Heresies of the First and Second Centuries*, ch. 6; Mead, *Simon Magus*; K. Rudolph, *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, pp. 294-98; Salles-Dabadie, *Récherches sur Simon le Mage*; Waitz, 'Simon Magus in der altchristlichen Literatur'.

inserts them at the head of the list.⁴⁸ Berthold of Regensburg wrote that the first heresy was that of Simon.⁴⁹

From an early stage, however, two distinct strands of thought about Simon emerged. The first was a body of apocryphal literature which recounted the miraculous activities of Simon - his magical tricks, his contests with the apostles and so on. The second, more dominant, strand was the polemical tradition, initiated by Justin. This concentrated almost exclusively on the doctrines of Simon and the sect of the Simonians.⁵⁰ Justin, from whom most subsequent accounts were derived, wrote that Simon the Samaritan (whom he clearly identified with the Simon Magus in Acts) was a powerful magician, and that he was worshipped as a god and 'first principle' by the sect which he had founded. He was associated with a prostitute from Tyre named Helen, a wandering soul, said to be a reincarnation of Helen of Troy and supposedly Simon's 'first thought' (*ennoia*). This led to accusations of sexual licence and deviancy against Simon by early heresiologists, which, curiously in view of the emphasis later put on this characteristic of the medieval heretic, is the one accusation not transmitted to the medieval polemical traditions about Simon. Similar reports, essentially elaborations on this basic story, appeared in a number of the early Church Fathers such as Irenaeus, Tertullian and Hippolytus. The polemical accounts of Simon's doctrinal position tended to concentrate on one or other of two accusations. One was the act of simony itself, the second was the loosely dualist or Gnostic teachings which were attributed to Simon. For instance, the *Libellus adversus omnes hereses* of Pseudo-Tertullian (from about the first half of the

⁴⁸*Liber antihaeresis*, XXVI (MBVP² 24, 1575).

⁴⁹Berthold of Regensburg, Sermon 28 (Schönbach, p. 31).

⁵⁰Leclercq, 'Simoniaca haeresis', p. 523.

third century) does not even mention Simon's attempts to buy the Holy Spirit. Instead it mentions a line of disciples 'who said the same things as him'. Simon is thus here considered to be the founder of a sect. Similarly, Philastrius puts Simon at the head of his catalogue, but omits Simon's wish to buy the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, this is the very grievance with which Augustine reproaches Simon.⁵¹ These two accusations passed, *inter alia*, into the medieval polemical tradition.

The thinking which reckoned Simon Magus to be the first heretic therefore matured comparatively early on, even if the reasons for this identification were somewhat obscure. In comparison to the earlier centuries, the existing medieval sources are perhaps a slimmer, but more varied, corpus. These sources inherited both strands of thought about Simon (the polemical and the apocryphal), but although the two remained distinct the balance between them had been altered. By this point Simon Magus has transcended his historical position as the supposed founder of Gnosticism and passed into the realm of medieval legend; much of which is fantastic indeed. It is true that some earlier literature, such as the *Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions*⁵² and the *Acts of Peter and Paul*,⁵³ did contain colourful legends about Simon Magus and his rivalry with Simon Peter, but this tradition was subordinate to the more important question of his status as arch-heresiarch. By the medieval period any serious consideration of this subject, and in particular of Simon's standing within the history of Gnosticism, had been abandoned and replaced by the third- and fourth-century legends, suitably embellished. Detailed accounts of the Simonian legend appear in the mid-twelfth century

⁵¹Leclercq, 'Simoniaca haeresis', pp. 523-24.

⁵²Palmer & Moore, *The Sources of the Faust Tradition*, pp. 12-29.

⁵³Palmer & Moore, *The Sources of the Faust Tradition*, pp. 29-34.

Kaiserchronik,⁵⁴ and the popular thirteenth-century compilation, the *Legenda aurea*.⁵⁵ Canto XIX of Dante's *Inferno* describes the fate of the Magus and all his followers (eternally condemned to be embedded upside down in the ground). Some material can also be found in the anti-simony treatises of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.⁵⁶

Only in the polemical works do any traces of the earlier theological arguments remain. This literature is a direct continuation of the early polemical tradition, albeit in a drastically reduced form. At least some of these sources derive from a short section in Gratian's *Decretum* (a direct reproduction of the catalogue of heresies in Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*⁵⁷), which places Simon at the head of the list of heretics. Here it is reported that the Simonians were named after:

Simon, who was skilled in magical arts, whom Peter in the Acts of the Apostles cursed because he wished to buy the gift of the Spirit from the Apostles for money. They said that creation did not come from God, but from a certain celestial power.⁵⁸

The three essential motifs of the medieval Simonian tradition are present in this statement: first that he was a magician, second that he tried to buy the power of the Holy Spirit and third that he had generated unorthodox doctrinal beliefs. With the exception of Hugh of Amiens and Eckbert of Schönau, who do not mention Simon's doctrinal beliefs, these elements occur in all the medieval sources although the weighting given to each varies from

⁵⁴Palmer & Moore, *The Sources of the Faust Tradition*, p. 11.

⁵⁵Transl. Palmer & Moore, pp. 35-41.

⁵⁶For example Cardinal Humbert, *Libri III adversus simoniacos* (Thaner, pp. 95-253); Gerhoch of Reichersberg, *Tractatus adversus simoniacos* (PL 194, 1135-372).

⁵⁷PL 82, 298-305.

⁵⁸'Symoniani a Symone dicti, magicae disciplinae perito, cui Petrus in Actibus Apostolorum maledixit pro eo, quod ab Apostolis Spiritus sancti gratiam pecunia emere voluisset. Hii dicunt, creaturam non a Deo esse, sed a virtute creatam quadam superna.' C. 24 q. 3 c. 39 (Friedberg, vol. I, col. 1001).

time to time. Two sources take their material directly from Gratian: Ebrard of Béthune, who reproduces the section from the *Decretum*,⁵⁹ and Alvarus Pelagius who repeats the same section⁶⁰, whilst at the same time interpolating his own more detailed comments. Other sources (Berthold of Regensburg,⁶¹ Pseudo-Reinerius⁶² and Anselm of Alessandria⁶³) contain a greatly shortened version of the catalogue of heretics; these list the names of the heretics but no details. The passage written by Honorius Augustodunensis in his *Liber de haeresibus* is based upon the *Decretum*, with the addition of some explanatory material.⁶⁴ Finally stand three apparently unique Simonian traditions. The first is a brief but significant section in the *Summa contra hereticos* attributed to Peter Martyr,⁶⁵ the second is a long passage contained within a discussion about baptism in Hugh of Amiens' treatise;⁶⁶ the third is an exposition of the nature of Simon's offence by Eckbert of Schönau in the course of a discussion about the validity of simoniacal orders. The differing emphases which these sources place on the various aspects of the Magus figure make it all the more difficult to answer the question precisely why he was considered to be a heretic. There are three possible answers: first, because he committed the act of simony, second on the grounds of his doctrinal beliefs and third, through his association with magic and the Devil.

⁵⁹With the exception of the word 'fraterna' in place of 'superna'; which given the similarity in the ms. abbreviations for these words is almost certainly due to a scribal error. *Liber antihaeresis*, XXVI (MBVP² 24, 1576).

⁶⁰According to Alvarus' own statement, *Collyrium fidei*, II: i (Meneses, p. 232).

⁶¹Sermon 28 (Schönbach, p. 31).

⁶²Pseudo-Reinerius, VI (Nickson, p. 106).

⁶³*Tractatus de hereticis*, 18 (Dondaine, 'La hiérarchie II', p. 323).

⁶⁴PL 172, 236.

⁶⁵*Contra hereticos*, 23 (Käppeli, p. 331).

⁶⁶*De ecclesia*, XIII (PL 192, 1270-71).

The question of whether simony was thought to be a heresy at all has already been considered in Ch. 1. The confusion which existed among canonists and theologians was only increased by the conventional association between Simon Magus, who was universally acknowledged as the first heretic, and the sin of simony, which was not technically acknowledged as a heresy. All the polemical sources (apart from the truncated catalogues of heretics recorded by Berthold, Pseudo-Reinerius and Anselm) report that Simon had tried to buy the gifts of the Holy Spirit from the Apostles, and that it was for this reason that he was cursed by Peter. In only two sources, however, is there suggested a possible link between this action and Simon's identification as a heretic; this is in Alvarus Pelagius' *Collyrium fidei* and Eckbert of Schönau's *Sermones*. Alvarus reports, as do the other sources, that Simon was justly cursed by Peter because he wished to buy the gift of the Holy Spirit from the Apostles. Moreover, it is clear from other passages in the *Collyrium* that Alvarus does indeed consider simony to be a heresy. Earlier in the work, for instance, he writes quite clearly that simony is a heresy, and that to uphold it is 'heretical, and against the faith, and against the writing of both Testaments, and ecclesiastical ordinances'.⁶⁷ This implies that, in Alvarus' eyes at least, Simon was the first heretic because he was the first person to commit the act of simony. However, this is never explicitly stated; furthermore, other passages suggest a different basis for Simon's heresy. The key to this apparent contradiction lies in the following statement: 'This Simon was a heretic in that he *believed that it was possible* to buy and sell the grace of the Holy Spirit'.⁶⁸ (This is in fact the force of Peter's words to Simon in Acts 8: 20: 'May your money perish with you, because you thought you

⁶⁷'Quae assertio est haeretica, et contra fidem, et contra utriusque paginam Testamenti, et contra ecclesiasticas sanctiones.' *Collyrium fidei*, I: lvi (Meneses, p. 192).

⁶⁸'In hoc iste Simon fuit haeticus, qui credidit quod posset vendi et emi gratia Spiritus Sancti.' *Collyrium fidei*, II: i (Meneses, p. 232). My italics.

could obtain God's gift with money!') Elsewhere Alvarus writes that to 'believe and judge that the Holy Spirit and his gift can be bought or sold is a heresy'.⁶⁹ In other words the heresy lay not in the attempt but in the belief that such a thing was possible. This suggests a doctrinal, rather than an authoritarian, basis for Simon's heresy by implying that Simon thought himself equal to God and able to influence God's activities in the world.

This line of thought is confirmed by Eckbert's discussion of Simon's actions. This occurs during a sermon arguing against the Cathars' teaching that the sacraments of unworthy priests, and in particular simoniacal priests, are invalid.⁷⁰ The arguments which Eckbert advances against this heresy are the standard ones of the period, but his ensuing discourse on the nature of Simon's original offence is illuminating. In support of their position the heretics refer to the words of Peter to Simon Magus: 'may your money be with you in perdition, because you thought you could possess the gift of God for money'. Eckbert's immediate focus is on the nature of Simon's transaction in order to explain how these words applied to Simon but not to present-day simoniacs. The Magus' action was more vile than any of the simoniacs' actions, primarily because simoniacs do not seek to put themselves on an equal footing with the apostles, but in fact venerate them.⁷¹ Simon's transaction was rasher than theirs because he impudently and openly offered money for the gift of God as though it was the same as the goods he could buy in the market place. Simoniacs, by contrast, are not quite so brazen, since they (mistakenly) consider an office to be a secular commodity rather than a spiritual gift.⁷² It is clear from Eckbert's exposition that Simon's sin lay

⁶⁹'Nam credere et aestimare quod Spiritus Sanctus et eius donum vendi vel emi potest haeresis est.' *Collyrium fidei*, I: lvi (Meneses, p. 192).

⁷⁰*Sermones*, XI (Harrison, vol. I, pp. 237-94).

⁷¹*Sermones*, XI (Harrison, vol. I, p. 291).

⁷²*Sermones*, XI (Harrison, vol. I, p. 291).

primarily in his intention; as in Alvarus' text he thought that it was possible to buy the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This makes his sin infinitely graver than that of the simoniacs, whose chief error is to mistake the nature of those gifts: 'Therefore that which principally Simon thought he could possess, they judge to be secondary in their transaction'.⁷³

The fact that simony was not generally classified as a heresy, and the passages from Alvarus and Eckbert cited above, lead to the second possibility; that Simon was considered to be a heretic on the basis of his doctrinal teachings. Medieval polemicists were heavily influenced by the Patristic view of Simon Magus as the founder of Gnosticism and the 'father of all heresies', and yet their discussion of his doctrinal beliefs is curiously insubstantial. Most of the sources do mention some sort of heretical belief. Peter Martyr, for example, states that Simon taught a form of dualist predestination.⁷⁴ However, it is significant that apart from this one instance, the heretical doctrines reported in the sources are attributed to the sect of the Simonians, rather than to Simon himself. Thus Honorius and Ebrard, following Gratian, say that the Simonians taught that the world was not created by God but by another power (in other words standard gnostic teachings).⁷⁵ Once again, however, it is Alvarus Pelagius who gives the most information. He repeats the standard accusations about dualism from the *Decretum* - that the world was made by a celestial power other than God - and in order to explain the error goes on to say:

but that celestial power, as creatures call the creator, is [itself] created, because everything which is outside God is created.

⁷³'Quod ergo simon principaliter existimabat possidere, isti secundario existimant in sua negotiatione'. *Sermones*, XI (Harrison, vol. I, p. 291).

⁷⁴See this chapter below, p. 201, n. 91.

⁷⁵Honorius, *Liber de haeresibus* (PL 192, 236); Ebrard of Béthune, *Liber antihaeresis*, XXVI (MBVP² 24, 1576).

Therefore another creature cannot be created, because to create is to make something *ex nihilo*, which only the omnipotent Creator is capable of, and on this account is a heresy.

The argument is concluded by citing verses from Genesis and the Psalms, and certain 'articles of the faith' from the *Decretum* which support Alvarus' view.

However, even the comparatively detailed consideration of doctrinal questions by Alvarus does not prove that Simon was convicted as a heretic on doctrinal grounds. Although all the sources say that the Simonians were named after Simon Magus, none explains whether their doctrines were held by the Magus himself and so transmitted to the sect, or whether the Simonians drew their beliefs from some other source. Whether Simon Magus was in fact the founder of the Simonians has frequently been questioned; it has been suggested that the early polemicists, in particular Justin, confused the Simon Magus who appears in Acts with a slightly later Simon who was the founder of a Samaritan sect.⁷⁶ However this makes little difference to the present discussion - the early Church Fathers and the medieval polemicists were quite convinced that they were one and the same person. Their silence on the link between Simonian doctrines and the person of the Magus, coupled with the general lack of discussion of heretical doctrines, indicates that Simon was not considered a heretic on doctrinal grounds.

We are left with the third possibility: Simon's association with magic and the Devil. In the polemical sources Simon is always described as a magician (*magus*)⁷⁷, or as a person skilled in magical learning, but in almost every case this is all that is said on the subject. The only exception to this is Alvarus

⁷⁶See Amann, 'Simon le magicien', p. 2137.

⁷⁷See McCasland, 'Simon Magus', 2 (p. 359) for the origins of the title of magus.

Pelagius, who adds that the magical arts have been condemned by the Church.⁷⁸ This reticence is surprising in view of the wealth of material which the non-polemical sources contain on this subject - indeed it is Simon's status as a magician, and especially his competition with Simon Peter, which are the most prominent feature of these accounts.⁷⁹ The *Legenda aurea* depicts the two as engaging in a contest of signs and miracles. Simon performs a series of wonders, culminating in an attempt to fly into the heavens. His successful flight is abruptly terminated by Peter's exorcism of the devils holding up the Magus, who came crashing to the ground and was instantly killed. Another story shows Simon using magic to make a body appear to have come to life - only to be ousted by Peter who brings about a genuine resurrection. In both these stories Simon Magus' magical power, although real enough, is inferior to that of the Holy Spirit which Simon Peter wields. Coupled with this tradition was the link which was made in popular culture between Simon and the Devil, who was cast as the prime motivator behind Simon's activities. The Magus had always been closely associated with the figure of the Antichrist and in the Middle Ages he was identified as a type of the Antichrist.⁸⁰ He was a false prophet who prefigured the Antichrist (even in his personal characteristics - hypocrisy, for example) in the same way as the true prophets had prefigured the true Christ;⁸¹ and many of his activities such as fraudulent miracle working were compared to those of the Antichrist.⁸²

⁷⁸*Collyrium fidei* II: i (Meneses, p. 232).

⁷⁹See for instance Butler, *The Myth of the Magus*, ch. 4; Flint, *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe*, ch. 10; Cook & Herzman, 'Simon the Magician and the Medieval Tradition' pp. 29-43; Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*, p. 34.

⁸⁰Emmerson & Herzman, 'Antichrist, Simon Magus, and Dante's "Inferno" XIX', pp. 380-82.

⁸¹Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages*, p. 75.

⁸²Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages*, p. 27.

These traditions were widely represented in medieval literature and art,⁸³ and there seems little reason why polemicists should not have included them in their work. The stories could, of course, have been omitted precisely because they were so popular and familiar, in which case it would be enough for polemicists simply to mention Simon - anyone familiar with the legends and traditions would be able to supplement the necessary details. Their inclusion could also have been unnecessary because the exercise of magic, in addition to being an activity which was proscribed by both secular and ecclesiastical authorities,⁸⁴ was in itself suspicious, since even when apparently innocent it carried the possibility of involving the demonic.⁸⁵ Simon's description as a magician who could perform amazing tricks and signs therefore highlighted his supernatural nature, and strongly presupposed his diabolical origin. This does not, however, prove that his identification as a heretic was made as a direct consequence of his magical activities. Although from the eleventh century onwards 'heresy and witchcraft were increasingly identified with each other and both of them associated with diabolism',⁸⁶ the fact that polemicists do not discuss this link indicates either that they were unaware of the link, or that it was not of direct concern to them. In any case, their work derived directly from the early polemical tradition about Simon which had been, and remained, distinct from the apocryphal stories. It seems more likely, therefore, that polemicists deliberately omitted these traditions because, at least as far as they were concerned, they had little relevance for the issue of Simon as a heretic. For this reason Simon's undeniable status as a magician, although indicative of

⁸³Emmerson & Herzman, 'Antichrist, Simon Magus, and Dante's "Inferno" XIX', pp. 379-81; Cook & Herzman, 'Simon the Magician and the Medieval Tradition', pp. 37-41.

⁸⁴Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*, ch. 8.

⁸⁵Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*, pp. 181-2; Russell, *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages*, pp. 71-72.

⁸⁶Russell, *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages*, p. 95.

his fundamentally evil nature, does not in itself provide grounds for his status as a heretic.

None of the three possibilities - simony, heretical doctrine, magic - fully explains why Simon was considered a heretic from such an early stage. The real reason for his identification as a heretic lies more in his intrinsic nature, rather than in any individual acts which he may have committed. The association with magic and the Devil hints at this, but it is only when the figure of Simon Magus is considered from the point of view of typical heretical characteristics that the picture begins to fall into place. This emphasis is much more a feature of the medieval polemic than it is of earlier accounts. Above all, he displays the *superbia* which was the essential hallmark of the medieval concept of the heretic. In Eckbert's account Simon is vile and full of envy of the apostles whose powers he covets so greatly; his pride leading him to affect an equality with them which he does not possess.⁸⁷ It was not so much the act of simony itself, but his desire to possess the Holy Spirit, and his arrogance in thinking that he could control the workings of the Spirit, which made him a heretic. Similarly, more culpable was the way in which he used his magical arts to challenge the apostles and to enhance his own status as a miracle worker, rather than the arts themselves. These perspectives are clearest in Hugh of Amiens' account of the legend in which, as in all the others, envy and pride are at the root of Simon's downfall. Hugh says that Simon was 'stupefied with admiration' when he saw the miracles which the apostles Peter and John performed, and that he coveted the power of the Holy Spirit 'through ambition beyond measure'. Simon's pride led him to believe that he could manipulate this

⁸⁷*Sermones*, XI (Harrison, vol. I, pp 291-92).

power, which lawfully belongs only to the priestly office.⁸⁸ Hugh's account also underlines Simon Magus' opposition to the apostles and especially to Simon Peter - a stance which is common in those medieval accounts which depict him as trying to out-do Peter in miracle contests, but unusual in polemical sources. Again it is pride which motivates Simon's attempt to pit himself against Christ's chosen apostle. Hugh makes it clear that this attempt was ultimately futile, because the power which Simon arrogantly supposed himself to hold was nothing in comparison to the power of Simon Peter:

But the power of Peter, but the high-priestly authority, but the purity of the Catholic faith, instantly destroyed this plague in Simon and in his accomplices, and put them under a curse.⁸⁹

Here the powers and virtues which the Magus displays are shown in their true light: Simon's powers and magical skills are false, he lacks any authority for his ministry, he has been irredeemably corrupted by pride, he is steeped in avarice. He displays the characteristic ignorance and stupidity of the heretic by his misunderstanding of the way in which the Holy Spirit works - in fact he is the archetypal *illitterati* heretic, without knowledge or discernment, without even the humility to acknowledge his lack of erudition. Most importantly of all, this account, which significantly appears within the context of a discussion about baptism, emphasises a point which is only implicit in other sources, that Simon had been baptised by a lawful authority (the apostles). This not only made his sins all the more heinous, but was a prerequisite if Simon was to be categorised as a heretic, because according to medieval polemicists a person who had never been a full member of the institutional Church - in other words who had not been baptised - could not properly be considered a heretic, whatever doctrines they held. Simon was

⁸⁸*De ecclesia*, I: xiii (PL 192, 1270).

⁸⁹'Sed Petri potestas, sed pontificalis auctoritas, sed fidei Catholicae puritas, hanc in Simone pestem, et in ejus complicitibus illico perdidit, et maledictioni subjecit.' *De ecclesia*, I: xiii (PL 192, 1270).

indeed a member of the Church, and for this reason, writes Hugh, not only Simon but his followers and all other heretics will deservedly be destroyed, because 'following the reception of sacred baptism they were confirmed as the faithful of Christ by a bishop'.⁹⁰ Simon is therefore characterised as a typical 'enemy from within'. The way in which he posed as a seemingly devout member of the Church, whilst secretly working against the apostles, showed his hypocrisy and duplicity - branding him with the other essential hallmark of the 'treacherous' heretic, the *species pietatis*.

What was the function of the figure of Simon Magus within the medieval polemical scheme? On a purely historical level, he was the original heretic, the opponent of Simon Peter, the first in a long line of enemies with which the Church had to do battle. He was credited with the foundation of the sect of the Simonians. However, there is another, suprahistorical, dimension to the figure. The stylised depiction of Simon as the possessor of all the typical characteristics of the medieval heretic gives the figure the role of archetypal heretic. This archetype establishes two points: first that there were no heretics before the existence of the Church, and second that the heretic must be a member of the institutional Church. The association of this archetypal heretic with the Devil and magic underlined his own diabolical nature and strengthened the growing sense of the supernatural nature of heresy and of the other-worldly existence of heretics which emerged during the later medieval period. Just as his rival Simon Peter was seen as Christ's agent on earth, so Simon Magus was depicted as the human agent of the Devil, and precursor of the Antichrist. Moreover, Simon was not only an enemy of the Church during his lifetime, but his malevolent influence was seen to extend

⁹⁰ '...quod post perceptionem sacri baptismatis confirmantur ab episcopo fideles Christi'. *De ecclesia*, XIII (PL 192, 1271).

far beyond his grave. Thus he was not only the founder of a historical sect, but the initiator of a diabolical succession of heretics. Perhaps this is where the real foundation of Simon's heresy lies. Could it be the case that Simon Magus was condemned as a heretic because he had founded a sect which held heretical doctrines, wherever those doctrines had come from? Peter Martyr wrote that :

there are four kinds of Predestinarians. For there are certain of them who say that everything good is predestined by the good god, but that the whole of evil is predestined by the devil; which error they took from Simon Magus and from the Manicheans who, it is read, disseminated this wickedness.⁹¹

Was it his status as a heresiarch, rather than a heretic, which was the focus of attention? Did his true crime lie in the fact that he was founder of a long line of heretics whose existence (it was firmly believed) continued into the medieval period? When we come to consider the medieval polemical tradition, Simon Magus stands as not only the first member of the *ecclesia malignantium*, but also the initiator of a diabolical succession which perpetuated the existence of that body. All the medieval catalogues mention Menander, Simon's disciple who founded his own sect and passed on Simon's teachings. In this way the magician, acting at the instigation of the Devil, passed on his diabolical commission to the long line of heretics which he instituted.

All heretics, therefore, were sustained by, and had their ultimate origin in, the Devil. When Eckbert of Schönau, for instance, devoted a whole chapter of his *Sermones* to delineating the apostolic succession of the Roman Church it was to prove this very point - the Cathars could not be members of the true

⁹¹'Sunt autem predestinatorum genera IIII^{or}. Quidam enim sunt qui dicunt bona omnia preordinata esse a deo bono, mala vero a diabolo cuncta; quem errorem traxerunt a Simone mago et a manicheis qui hanc perfidiam disseminasse leguntur.' *Contra hereticos*, 23 (Käppeli, p. 331).

Church because their lineage did not connect at any point with that of the Roman Church.⁹² The diabolical succession mirrored the apostolic succession of the Catholic Church; not for nothing was the archetypal heretic Simon Magus paired with that archetypal Catholic and founder of the true Church, Simon Peter. Simon Peter received the apostolic commission from Christ, and became the rock on which the true Church, the *ecclesia sanctorum*, was founded. Simon Magus received his diabolical commission from the Devil, and founded the *ecclesia malignantium*, a subversive institution whose *raison d'être* was the destruction of the true Church. How individuals become members of the diabolical Church is not clear. There seems to be little sense in the polemical literature that people are predestined to be members of either the two churches, except insofar as heretics are deemed to be a particular kind of person. In Augustine's two-cities scheme there was apparently the possibility of conversion from the *civitas diaboli* to membership of the *civitas dei*.⁹³ Berthold of Regensburg's four-fold classification of men,⁹⁴ however, implies that membership of the churches is fixed, and therefore that movement from one to the other is impossible, since the first two classes (heretics and doubters) are eternally damned. And yet he also talks about the *putantes*, the deep thinkers who may be led astray and presumably have the potential at least to become heretics. Perhaps it is more the case, as we saw in Ch. 3, that people are predisposed, rather than predestined, to heresy and thus to membership of the *ecclesia malignantium* - predisposed in the sense that moral weaknesses left them vulnerable to infiltration and manipulation by demons.

⁹²*Sermones*, III: *Sermo de incremento et manifestatione catholice fidei* (Harrison, vol. I, pp. 36-54).

⁹³Barr, 'The Two Cities', p. 223.

⁹⁴See this chapter below, p. 206, n. 100.

Further elucidation of the two-churches typology is made more difficult by terminology: *ecclesia sanctorum*, *ecclesia malignantium*, *ecclesia dei* and *ecclesia romana* are all used and the relationship between these different concepts is not always clear. It goes without saying that all heretics were by virtue of their nature members of the *ecclesia malignantium*. Conversely, the *ecclesia sanctorum*, being the repository of the true faith, was the natural home of true Christians. But what is the relation of these two churches to the universal Church of God, the *ecclesia dei*, and of that church to the *ecclesia romana*? First, the *ecclesia dei* was invariably held to be synonymous with the Roman Church. Thus Moneta: 'it is clear that the Roman Church is the Church of God, which has faith and good works, in which two things the Church is constituted'.⁹⁵ It does not follow from this, however, that *ecclesia dei* was simply an interchangeable term for *ecclesia sanctorum*; neither does it follow that the *ecclesia sanctorum* was itself identified with the *ecclesia romana*.⁹⁶ Only in the primitive purity of the Apostolic Church (the *ecclesia primitiva*) could this have been conceivable; and there were contradictions inherent in naming the Roman Church as the *ecclesia dei* which precluded such a possibility. The most pressing of these contradictions was the problem of maintaining that the Church of God was a perfect body, whilst allowing at the same time that the Roman Church was marred by institutional and human flaws - the latter point being a position which ecclesiologists were most unwilling to maintain. This was a perennial theological problem going back to Augustine and Gregory, but it was all the more urgent in the face of the definition of the true Church which many heretics were putting forward, based upon the simple test of 'by their fruits you shall know them'. The solution to this dilemma

⁹⁵'...palam est, quod Ecclesia Romana est Ecclesia Dei, quae fidem habet, & opera bona, in quibus duobus consistit Ecclesia'. *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*, V: i (Ricchini, p. 390).

⁹⁶In this Moneta follows Augustine, who did not identify the city of God with the visible Church. See Barr, 'The Two Cities', pp. 223-25.

was the concept of an *ecclesia mixta*.⁹⁷ For ecclesiological, sacramental and practical reasons it had to be conceded that the Roman Church was a mixed institution which contained both good and bad. All polemicists (in common with their contemporaries) therefore maintained that unworthy priests, for instance, were still members of the *ecclesia dei*.⁹⁸ Thus Bernard of Fontcaude argued that just as the Corinthian Church with which St. Paul had dealt contained good and bad in its congregation, so it was with the Church of God.⁹⁹

The idea of the *ecclesia mixta*, however, led to problems of its own. It was one thing to maintain that unworthy priests were members of the institutional Church, since no Christian could hope to avoid sin completely; but the distinctive nature of the heretic made their continued presence in the institutional Church more difficult to explain. How could the false Christians (the heretics) be separated from the true (albeit sinful) Christians without undermining the authority of the institutional Church? What was needed was a conceptual device which accounted for the presence of the reprobate within the Church of God and by which they could be separated from the merely sinful. In one sense this separation had already been strengthened by the shift away from emphasising the individual acts which a heretic had committed towards emphasising the idea that the heretic was a particular kind of person. In this way the heretic was distinguished from the 'normally' sinful people who constituted the majority of the institutional Church's membership. The problem was, however, more complex than this. The establishment of the figure of Simon Magus as the archetypal heretic had

⁹⁷Congar, *L'ecclésiologie du haut moyen âge*, pp. 90-92, notes that the idea of the *ecclesia mixta* was also discussed by Bede. Ultimately it derived from Augustine's writings against the Donatists.

⁹⁸E. g., Moneta of Cremona, *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*, V: v, 5 (Ricchini, pp. 438-39).

⁹⁹*Adversus Waldensium sectam*, XII: x (PL 204, 837).

thrown up the question of his membership of the Church, and this fed into the wider problem of the heretic's position within the *ecclesia dei*. Medieval polemicists, since they regarded heresy as an absolute evil and not always merely a corruption of the truth, found it difficult to accept that heresy could originate from within the Church itself. The arch-heretic Simon was, apparently, a member of the Church, since the account in Acts says specifically that he believed and was baptised. In one sense this suited the polemicists, since it meant that he could properly be considered a heretic; in another sense it was unacceptable. They wished to emphasise the extra-ecclesiastical origins of heresy, and so were unwilling to admit that Simon could be a true member of the *ecclesia dei*. The paradox was solved by the two-churches typology. Simon was apparently a member of the Church by virtue of his baptism, but this conferred membership only into the institutional Church. In reality he was a member of the diabolical Church; part of the mystical body of Satan rather than that of Christ. There was no contradiction in this: it was perfectly possible to be a member of the earthly Church, whilst still belonging to the *ecclesia malignantium*.

It would appear, therefore, that the *ecclesia dei* was itself envisaged as a 'broad church' which encompassed both the *ecclesia sanctorum* and the *ecclesia malignantium* - a true *ecclesia mixta*. This would appear to be the implication of Berthold of Regensburg's statement that the *ecclesia dei* contained four kinds of men: heretics who deny the existence of the Universal Church or contradict the faith, and doubters who are not certain that the faith is true (both of which categories are eternally damned), those who ponder too much on questions of the faith and who can easily be led astray, and finally true

Christians.¹⁰⁰ Having made a conceptual distinction between the two communities, there arose the further problem of how the two were to be distinguished in practice when both were apparently contained within one physical institution. One solution was to stress, as Moneta did, the role of faith in distinguishing between the two communities. It is not necessarily the fruits of the Spirit (good works) which are the hallmark of the true Church, however much heretics point to the lack of spiritual fruits as evidence that the Roman Church is not the true Church. Faith precedes good works, and so 'the essence of the Church', writes Moneta, 'begins with faith'. It is by its faith that the true Church is initially recognised and distinguished from the *ecclesia malignantium*.¹⁰¹ The utility of this argument, however, was somewhat limited, given the emphasis which was laid on the deceitful way in which heretics pretended to adhere to the teachings of the institutional Church. Individuals belonging to the two churches were not obviously distinct from each other due to the confusing effects of the *species pietatis*, generated by the lies, hypocrisy, secrecy and general deceit of members of the *ecclesia malignantium*.

Nevertheless, the superficial similarity between members of the two churches did have some practical uses. One was to provide a ready answer to the question of why heresy had apparently emerged so suddenly and as if from nowhere. The *ecclesia malignantium* had in fact remained in existence since its inception at the establishment of the true Church. At certain points in history - during the great doctrinal controversies of the early Church, for example - it had broken out into the open, but since then it had been concealed. In this way the essential continuity between the earlier and the

¹⁰⁰ Sermon 23 (Schönbach, pp. 17-18).

¹⁰¹ *Adversus Catharos et Valdenses*, V: i (Ricchini, p. 390).

medieval heresies was maintained. More importantly, this explains how those 'historical' accounts which place the origins of heresy in the recent past fit together with those which trace the origins of heresy back to the foundation of the Church. Within the context of the two-churches typology the precise historical advent of an individual sect lost much of its significance. Viewed as off-shoots of some monstrous diabolical body it seemed that they had existed for ever, or at least since the beginning of the Church. There were further functions which the two-churches typology could fulfil. Some of the success of dualism has been correctly attributed to its attraction as an explanation for the problem of evil. The two-churches typology provided an orthodox alternative to dualism which similarly accounted for the presence of evil in the institutional Church and the world. It allowed the true Church, the *ecclesia sanctorum*, to exist as a uniquely perfect body, whilst at the same time admitting that the institutional Church was flawed, thus maintaining the widest possible membership for the Roman Church. It explained various puzzling phenomena, such as the apparent adherence to the institutional Church by many heretics and the way in which heresy could erupt in different locations with no visible connection between individual heretical groups. Above all, it demonized the heretic, to the extent that not only was the heretic set apart as intrinsically different in character from other, albeit sinful, members of the institutional Church, but was endowed with a supernatural nature and powers which went far beyond those of any normal human being.

The two-churches typology meant that the visible unity of the *ecclesia dei*, in the form of the Roman Church, contained an inbuilt and invisible disunity. It was, however, much more than a conceptual device for distinguishing true from false Christians. Such was the grip of the concept on the medieval mind

that the *ecclesia malignantium* was believed to have a real (albeit often concealed) existence. As Moore points out:

It came to be universally believed among Catholics (or at any rate among bishops) that there was a single highly organized dualist church, emanating from Bulgaria, which had lain concealed since antiquity, and whose numerous and persuasive emissaries to Latin Christendom were dedicated to the destruction of the Church and of man on earth, and the restoration of Satan's kingdom by means of unrestrained sexual licence, the abandonment of procreation and the renunciation of Christian belief.¹⁰²

This belief, and the heretic's place within it, had significant consequences. One was that the concept of heresy, previously a doctrinal one, began to be assimilated into a supernatural framework, and heretics themselves were deemed to have a supernatural nature which transcended their earthly existence. Just as the medieval concept of the Church was situated within the wider plan of salvation history, so the concept of heresy came to be seen within the wider framework of diabolical history. As Grundmann concludes in 'Der Typus des Ketzers':

medieval Catholicism, which allowed nothing to escape from its world-order, did not ignore these dark dictates of the imagination, but satisfied them with horror stories about heresy; in this way the moral order remained protected, or even supported, by the framework in which the whole picture of heresy was seen: as a work of Satan and the Antichrist and as the antithesis of the *civitas dei*.¹⁰³

Another consequence was a fantastic over-estimation of the diffusion and strength of heresy. In fitting heresy and heretics into their ecclesiological scheme, polemicists attributed a much greater degree of coherence and organisation to heresy than it actually possessed; and so a belief in the

¹⁰² Moore, *Formation of a Persecuting Society*, p. 89.

¹⁰³ '...hat der Katholizismus des Mittelalters, der nichts seiner Weltordnung entgehen ließ, auch diese dunklen Regungen der Phantasie nicht ignoriert, sondern befriedigt durch die Gruselgeschichten über die Ketzerei; die moralische Ordnung blieb gewahrt, ja sie wurde damit zugleich gestützt, durch den Rahmen, in dem das Ganze des Ketzerbildes steht: als Werk des Satans und Antichrists und als Widerspruch zur *civitas dei*'. 'Der Typus', p. 327.

essential homogeneity of heresy became fundamental to medieval polemical thought. All heretics, however diverse they appeared on the surface, were diabolical brothers under the skin. Although a few polemicists were prepared to concede the positive role which heresy played in defining orthodoxy, the polemical view of heresy was clouded by its concentration on the essential nature of the heretic, rather than on the role of the institutional Church in the promotion of heresy. It was this focus on the 'otherness' of the heretic, on the heretic as a particular kind of person, which hindered an accurate analysis of the origins of heresy and militated against an effective response to the heretical movements on the part of the medieval Church. The two-churches typology and the diabolical archetype to which all heretics were subsumed ensured that the fight against heresy was directed away from the medieval Church itself, and towards a many-headed heretical demon which did not in reality exist:

Just as it is read in the books of the ancients that the chiefs and princes of the barbarians, pursuing human glory, nobly destroyed all kinds of monsters; just as Hercules destroyed Antaeus, Theseus the Minotaur, Jason the fire-breathing Bull, Meleager the incalculable wild boar, Coroebus the Stygian monster, Perseus the sea monster; so it is read that the noble princes of the holy Church conquered the monsters of all kinds of heretics and heresies with spiritual weapons. And just as Antaeus became stronger by recovering strength from the earth; just as the hydra after it lost its heads grew even more; so after the ancient and antiquated heresies had been eradicated the same ones sprouted up afresh. But there is a great difference in that the strength of Antaeus was destroyed, the hydra was completely eradicated; but among modern people no-one resisted the renewed heresies, no-one eradicated the heresies which have sprouted again. But I, least among all the sons of Jesse, chosen from later generations, will try to cut down Goliath with my own sword, and to kill the Egyptian who insults the Hebrews.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴*Sicut in antiquorum tractatibus legitur, quod proci et procures gentium, humanam venantes gloriam, genere diversa monstrorum genera deleverunt; ut Hercules Anthem, Theseus Minotaurum, Jason Taurum ignivorum, Meleagre inaestimabilem Aprum, Chorebus stygiale monstrum, Perseus Marinum portentum; sic generosi sanctae Ecclesiae procures diversorum haeticorum et haeresum monstra leguntur armis spiritualibus*

Alan of Lille's image of heresy is an inversion of the traditional Pauline depiction of the Church as many members united in the one mystical body of Christ. The hydra of heresy similarly possessed many heads but one body: the mystical body of Satan. All heretics were united through time by a supernatural nature which they held in common and which transcended their earthly and bodily existence - a nature which was irredeemably evil, utterly inimical to the true Church and ultimately created and sustained by the Devil.

expugnasse. Et sicut Antheus resumptis a terra viribus fortior factus est; hydra damno capitum facta locupletior; sic extirpatis antiquis et antiquatis haeresibus, eadem in novitate repullulant. Sed in hoc magna est differentia; quod Anthei fortitudo deleta, hydra funditus extirpata; sed non sunt inter modernos, qui innovatis haeresibus obvient, repullulantes extirpent. Ego tamen inter filios Jesse minimus de post fetantes [sic] assumptus, tentabo Goliam proprio gladio trucidare, et Aegyptium Hebraeis insultantem occidere.' *De fide catholica*, I: i (Pl 210, 307).

CONCLUSION

Epilogue: the Heretic, Jews and Pagans

It has been established that polemicists viewed the heretic as an intrinsically different kind of person from normal, sinful believers. The question remains whether, in polemicists' eyes, heretics were also intrinsically different from other unbelievers such as Jews or pagans, or whether they were merely a more culpable and dangerous kind of unbeliever. The historiographical trend has been towards the latter point of view; the essential theme being, in Moore's words, the 'assimilation of Jews, heretics and lepers into a single rhetoric which depicted them as a single though many-headed threat to the security of the Christian order...' ¹ Thus Lerner: 'The Church considered Jews, sorcerers, and heretics each in their way as minions of the devil whose threat was age-old'. ² This view has found its most articulate expression in Moore's *Formation of a Persecuting Society*, which argues for the development of a single 'persecuting mentality' which was expressed through the repression of a variety of already marginalised victims: heretics, Jews, lepers and homosexuals:

For all imaginative purposes heretics, Jews and lepers were interchangeable. They had the same qualities, from the same source, and they presented the same threat: through them the Devil was at work to subvert the Christian order and bring the world to chaos. ³

¹ Moore, *Formation of a Persecuting Society*, p. 88.

² *Heresy of the Free Spirit*, p. 4.

³ Moore, *Formation of a Persecuting Society*, p. 65.

From this point of view the picture is not so much of various stereotypes of heretics, Jews, lepers and so on, but of one single stereotype into which all the most feared outcasts of medieval society were assimilated.

Does the polemical literature indicate that such an assimilation took place? What little evidence there is on this question is confused. If we consider the earlier sense of heresy as in, for example, Jerome's definition, by which a person chooses for themselves the teaching which seems the best to them, then Jews or pagans⁴ would certainly fall within this category; but Jerome's proviso *licet ab ecclesia non recesserit* underlines the fact that he is referring to someone inside the institutional Church. The subsequent widening of this definition which led to the emphasis on the individual's attitude towards the institutional Church paradoxically narrows the definition as far as members of other faiths are concerned; since the question of attitude towards the authority of the institutional Church is relevant only to those who fall under its jurisdiction in the first place. Even when the polemicists do specifically discuss Jews and pagans the picture is no clearer. In Berthold of Regensburg's sermons he seems to view heretics, Jews and pagans each as species of unbelief; asserting that 'The Faith ought not to mix in any way with the infidelity of Jews, or pagans, with heresy or any kind of infidels'.⁵ Further on in the same sermon he is more specific:

So with the same kind of sin you have sinned more seriously than the Jews or pagans, and you will be punished more. For if the Jew commits six sins and the pagan similarly commits the same six and the Christian the same six, everything being

⁴Some polemicists (e. g. Alan of Lille) use 'pagan' interchangeably with 'Muslim'; others distinguish between the two, taking 'pagan' to refer to classical Greek and Roman pagans.

⁵'non sit mixta (fides) cum aliqua infidelitate judeorum, paganorum, heresi, vel aliquibus infidelitatiunculis'. Sermon 21 (Schönbach, p. 14).

equal, the pagan will be eternally punished in hell, the Jew more seriously, the Christian much more seriously.⁶

Elsewhere in Berthold's sermons heretics are merely more stupid than the other outcasts. All heretics, Jews and pagans are stupid, because they do not possess Christian truth, which is more rational and beautiful, more effective and virtuous than any of their ridiculous beliefs.⁷ But the faith of the heretics is the most stupid in the world, more stupid than that of the pagans or Jews, because they alone maintain that only those who are of their faith can be good. The Jews and pagans know better than to say such a thing.⁸ It is significant that Berthold nowhere says that Jews or pagans are heretics; in his thought the three appear to be distinct bodies, albeit possessing similar characteristics.

The ancient catalogues of heresies, which medieval polemicists so assiduously copied, often included Isidore's section on Jewish heretics such as the Pharisees and Sadducees; with the implication that the heretic-type with which we have been dealing is specifically that of a 'Christian' heretic, distinct from Judaism's own 'heretics'. Ebrard of Béthune wrote that the Pharisees and Sadducees were the two types of Jewish heretics. The same view is found in the inquisitorial treatise of Pseudo-David of Augsburg. Having defined a heretic as someone who wilfully throws away the faith into which they have been baptised - a definition which appears to preclude the Jews and Muslims - he adds 'Although among the Jews it may be said that those who have corrupted the writing of the Old Testament with distorted

⁶'unde eodem genere peccati gravior peccas quam judeus vel paganus, et plus punieris. si enim judeus peccaret sex peccatis et paganus similiter sex eisdem et christianus eisdem sex, omnibus aliis paribus, paganus eternaliter punitur in inferno, judeus gravior, christianus multo gravior'. Sermon 21 (Schönbach, p. 15).

⁷Sermon 28 (Schönbach, p. 29-30). In this sermon 'pagan' clearly refers to classical paganism rather than to Islam, since Berthold here ridicules classical gods such as Jove, Juno, Hercules and Mars.

⁸Sermon 28 (Schönbach, pp. 41-42).

interpretations are called heretics'.⁹ The latter again suggests that the Jews possess their own 'heretics'. Peter the Venerable articulated this sense of the different kinds of unbelievers, writing in the *Contra Petrobrusianos* that in the present days there are four principal 'sects' in existence: Christians, Jews, Saracens and pagans.¹⁰ A similar viewpoint, which focuses on the doctrinal similarities between the three groups rather than their common personal characteristics is evident in the thirteenth-century genealogy written down by Durand of Huesca, Moneta of Cremona and Benedict of Alignan. In this genealogy the Jews and pagans (and apostate Christians) are characterised as the original ancestors of the Cathars. Here the continuity between the heretic and the Jews and pagans is one of doctrinal error rather than nature; but as with Berthold the three still appear as distinct groups. Alan of Lille's treatise, which devotes one book to dealing with the Jews and a section in Ebrard of Béthune's *Liber antihaeresis* similarly concentrates on refuting the doctrinal errors of the two groups.¹¹ There is even less evidence in the polemical literature for the status of Muslims or pagans vis-à-vis that of heretics. Alan of Lille, as with his treatment of the Jews, focuses his attack on the errors of the Muslims. Peter the Venerable briefly mentions a few Muslim beliefs in the *Contra Petrobrusianos*.¹² A section of the Anonymous of Passau treatise similarly lists some of the errors which the author believes the Muslims to hold.¹³

⁹'Quamvis et apud Iudeos dicantur esse heretici, qui literam veteris testamenti pravis interpretacionibus corrumpunt.' *De inquisitione hereticorum* 2 (Preger, p. 204).

¹⁰*Contra Petrobrusianos*, 161 (Fearn, p. 94). Note that Peter also distinguishes between Muslims and pagans.

¹¹Ebrard of Béthune, *Liber antihaeresis*, XXVII-XXVIII (MBVP² 24, 1578-584). On the doctrinal questions at issue between Christians, Jews and Muslims see Pelikan, *Growth of Medieval Theology*, pp. 242-55.

¹²*Contra Petrobrusianos*, 161 (Fearn, p. 94-95).

¹³Nickson, *Pseudo-Reinerius*, app. B, pp. 181-84.

More unusual is a passage in the Anonymous' compilation dealing with the early career of Muhammad himself. This section, as well as reporting that Muhammad was influenced by certain anonymous Jewish heretics,¹⁴ significantly describes Muhammad as having been initially inspired by 'Jacobite heretics'.¹⁵ In view of the teachings which this passage attributes to these heretics (the denial of the deity of Christ, the Virgin birth and his crucifixion and death) this must be a reference to the Syrian Monophysites who rejected the teaching of the Council of Chalcedon on the person of Christ. In other words, rather than being a separate sect, Islam is here portrayed as itself deriving from a Christian heresy; so rather than being a distinct species of unbelief, Islam is merely a particular kind of Christian heresy. This viewpoint does not appear anywhere else in the polemical literature; although Berthold of Regensburg seems to hint at such a belief, suggesting that the actual form which the unbelief takes is of very little significance: 'Therefore let the heretics now accept their arid wood, as previously did the pagans and Jews, namely an arid deformed faith, and let them keep it so that they may be burnt with it'.¹⁶ In this sense the fact that the three groups are theoretically distinct bodies is not important; what is important is the fact that they are outside the Church. Those who are not for the Church are against the Church. The apparent assimilation of the categories of Muslim and heretic which is evident in the Anonymous of Passau compilation parallels Trachtenberg's conclusion in *The Devil and the Jews* that:

the "demonic" Jew was the product of a transference *in toto* of a prevailing corpus of belief concerning one hated and hunted

¹⁴Nickson, *Pseudo-Reinerius*, app. B, p. 181.

¹⁵Nickson, *Pseudo-Reinerius*, app. B, p. 181.

¹⁶'accipiant ergo et nunc heretici aridum lignum suum, ut prius pagani et judei, scilicet aridam deformem fidem, et servant, ut cum illa comburantur'. Sermon 28 (Schönbach, pp. 32-33).

class in European society to another whose conspicuous independence placed it in a similar category.¹⁷

To a limited extent the polemical literature bears out this conclusion. 'The Jew' was clothed with many of the same attributes which were accorded to 'the heretic' and described in terms of similar metaphors and symbols. Primarily, both were associated with the Devil and the Antichrist, but both were also accused of sorcery, sexual deviation and transmitting infectious diseases.

Yet there is undoubtedly a sense in which the polemical stereotype of 'the heretic' is conceptually distinct from those of the Jew or pagan; and this negates both the viewpoints discussed above. Jews and pagans were not enemies from within and so did not conform to the stereotype of 'the little foxes'. They did not possess the essential characteristics which were accorded to the medieval heretic. The *species pietatis* was the peculiar province of the heretic, who masqueraded as a true Christian. The element of *superbia* which was the foundation of the polemical concept of the heretic was lacking from the motives of the Jews. They could hardly be accused of arrogantly rejecting the teachings of their own faith or of having the presumption to preach without legitimate authorisation; merely of holding fast to the faith into which they had been born. Most important of all, they could not be considered traitors to the institutional Church and the Papacy, since they had never been members of Christian society in the first place. As we saw with the treatment of the figure of Simon Magus, baptism into the Church was a crucial factor in the creation of the heretic. It is significant that the only occurrence in the polemical literature of a historical link between Jews and heretics is the thirteenth-century genealogy of the Cathars - and

¹⁷Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews*, pp. 215-16.

this is in any case, as has already been pointed out, a genealogy of doctrinal error rather than of a specific sect. Rather the polemical consensus was that the first heretic had been Simon Magus, a Samaritan and so not a true Jew, but more importantly a baptised Christian.¹⁸ The reason why the Christian heretic is destined to receive the harshest eternal punishment is because, alone of all the other unbelievers, he is the traitor to his own community - a treachery which is compounded by the fact that, unlike the Jews and pagans, he nearly always tries to conceal his true nature. True, Bernard Gui included in his *Practica inquisitionis* a short section on the interrogation of Jews, but his concern is entirely with those Jews who have converted to Christianity and subsequently lapsed back into Judaism - thus renouncing, like any other heretic, the Church into which they have been baptised.¹⁹ This kind of Jew, unlike the majority of his race, is just as much a traitor as the 'Christian' heretic. All of these points apply equally to the position of the Muslims, although they figure less frequently in the polemical writings. There is in truth virtually no evidence in the polemical literature to support Trachtenberg's assertion that 'In the Christian world the Jew was inevitably looked upon as a heretic - indeed, *the* heretic'.²⁰ It is difficult to explain why, if this were true, the most essential aspects of the polemical heretic-type are lacking from the stereotype of the Jew. Moreover one might expect to find more detailed discussions about the status of Jews and Muslims in polemical treatises, or at least in those treatises which give a more theoretical consideration of the nature of heresy. As we have seen this is far from being the case. In fact, the stereotype which most closely corresponds with the heretic-type is that of the witch, which as well as all the other objectionable

¹⁸Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews*, p. 175, notes that public opinion often held Judaism responsible for the rise of certain Christian heresies such as the Nestorians. There is however no evidence of this viewpoint in the polemical literature.

¹⁹*Practica inquisitionis*, VII: 9-10 (Mollat, vol. II, pp. 46-48).

²⁰*The Devil and the Jews*, p. 174.

attributes possessed the essential characteristic of being a treacherous false Christian.

Within the polemical literature, then, there are three distinct views. The first, majority view sees heretics, Jews and pagans as graded but distinct species of unbelievers, with heretics regarded as worst of the three, Jews as the Christ-killers the second worst and pagans at the bottom. The second, minority view heightens the gravity of the Jews' and Muslims' unbelief by making them into a kind of heretic. The third view, implicit in the polemical concept of heresy discussed in this thesis, is that heretics are conceptually distinct from the other outcasts. Which of these is more representative of the wider ecclesiastical view is hard to say. The first view is in agreement with that of Aquinas, for instance, who argued that heresy was indeed a species of unbelief, distinct from that of the Jews and pagans:

So then there are two ways in which someone can deviate from the rightness of the Christian faith. First, because he does not will to assent to Christ himself; this resembles having a bad intention concerning the ultimate end. Such is the infidelity of pagans and Jews.²¹

The other way, according to Aquinas, of deviating from the faith is that of the heretic who, although he may think that he is assenting to Christ, chooses doctrines which are not those which Christ left to the Church. The second point of view, although occurring only twice in the polemical literature, is much more in keeping with the ecclesiastical and institutional developments which had been taking place during this period - for example those in canon law. Up until the pontificate of Innocent III it had been generally agreed that canon law was binding only on Christians, and did not apply to Jews and

²¹'A rectitudine igitur fidei Christianae dupliciter aliquis potest deviare. Uno modo, quia ipsi Christo non vult assentire: et hic habet quasi malam voluntatem circa ipsum finem. Et hoc pertinet ad speciem infidelitatis paganorum et Judaeorum'. *Summa theologiae*, 2a2æ. 11, 1 (transl. Gilbey, vol. 32, p. 82).

Muslims. This position had been abandoned by the beginning of the fourteenth century, when the classical canonists came more and more to accept that the Pope had the power to promulgate laws which were binding on non-Christians.²² Just as the medieval Church became alarmed by certain aspects of lay spirituality during this period and sought to bring such elements under its control, so it also became alarmed by the mere existence of Jews and Muslims, over whom it increasingly proclaimed its jurisdiction.²³ As Brundage points out, Boniface VIII's bull *Unam sanctam* (1302), usually seen in the context of the struggle between the Papacy and Philip the Fair, enshrined these new papal claims to jurisdiction over non-Christians.²⁴ Trachtenberg also refers to changes in the legal status of the Jew, which may reflect parallel changes in the legal status of the heretic.²⁵ It is also worth pointing out that the 'cohesive' view of Jews and Muslims as kinds of heretics occurs in inquisitorial treatises; during this period the Jews did come increasingly to be included within the inquisitorial remit.²⁶

Perhaps the problem of whether Jews and pagans could be considered heretics is analogous to the problem of *simoniaca haeresis*? Just as canonists and theologians were forced to make a theoretical distinction between simony and heresy, so also was there a theoretical distinction made between, for example, Jews and heretics:

Once again we must emphasize the signal division between the official policy of the Church and the realistic policy of its adherents. For all the Church's insistence upon the identity of Jew with heretic in its popular propaganda, the logicians of the Church still could not leap the hurdle of inconsistency involved. After all, the Jews were not and had never been

²²Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, pp. 162-64.

²³Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, pp. 163-64.

²⁴*Medieval Canon Law*, p. 164.

²⁵*The Devil and the Jews*, p. 161.

²⁶Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews*, pp. 177-81.

Christians, and could therefore on no logical premise be accused of deviation from a doctrine they had never espoused.²⁷

In the cases of both simony and the Jews, the institutional Church found itself struggling to maintain theoretical distinctions. whilst at the same time being carried along by its own desire to assert its control over its members. Some assimilation of the stereotypes of the heretic and the Jew was inevitable within the context of a Church and Papacy which was asserting its supreme jurisdiction not just over western Christendom, but increasingly over the rest of the world.

Conclusion

...initially at least, heresy was a deviation from accepted beliefs rather than something alien to them: it sprang from believing differently about the same things as opposed to holding a different belief.²⁸

Medieval polemicists would not have accepted Leff's definition of heresy. In their eyes, heresy was not merely a phenomenon which arose from pushing a particular theological perspective too far; but was indeed an alien phenomenon which derived from roots which were outside the true Church. Between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries the polemical concept of heresy underwent three principal changes. The first was the decline in the importance of the initial doctrinal error and the corresponding increase in emphasis on the individual's attitude to the institutional Church. At the same time there was a gradual merging of the concepts of schism and heresy. In the context of a papacy increasingly asserting its supreme jurisdiction, the idea of schism as orthodox dissent lost a good deal of its force; and as the Church itself increasingly became the subject of doctrinal definition, schism

²⁷Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews*, p. 178.

²⁸Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 2.

inevitably became assimilated into the category of heresy. These two changes contributed to the third change: the shift away from the consideration of the theological subtleties of particular doctrines and towards the person of the heretic. The notion that the heretic was a particular kind of person was not in itself a new one; it can be detected as far back as Tertullian and Irenaeus, for example.²⁹ Medieval polemicists, however, concentrated on this aspect of the concept of heresy to such an extent that it became the most fundamental aspect of their outlook and strategy. What kind of person could so wilfully defy his Church's authority and betray his community? The heresy-treason equation provided a ready answer to this; and the image of the heretic as traitor became one of the most powerful motifs of the medieval polemic against heresy. The heretic was a traitor not only to the Church and faith into which he had been baptised, but also to the society into which he had been born. The notion of the treacherous heretic - all the more potent since heretics were not always obviously so - helped to draw attention to the implications of heresy for the wider Christian society and compounded the fear and loathing with which heretics were regarded.

The changes which the concept of heresy and the heretic underwent were not, however, exclusively juridical and ecclesiological in nature. Changing beliefs in the power of the Devil and his human agents contributed to the focus on nature of the heretic. The heretic's supposed allegiance to the Devil - often taking concrete form in reports of diabolical pacts - stimulated a belief in the supernatural powers of heretics. To the notion of the 'treacherous' heretic was thus added the notion of the 'diabolical' heretic. This nature united all heretics, who came to be seen as members of a diabolical 'Church',

²⁹Peters, *Heresy and Authority*, p. 21.

covertly engaged in warfare against true Christians, and dedicated to the overthrow of the true Church. The medieval polemic against heresy thus elaborated a theory of membership of the Church which allowed for the presence of both 'true' and 'false' Christians within the one temporal institution, whilst maintaining a theoretical distinction between the two; incidentally giving rise to the perennial - and largely unanswerable - problem of how to discern in practice between the two groups (a problem which was also to preoccupy Wyclif).

Who generated these changes in the concept of heresy? It cannot necessarily be assumed that the concept of heresy put forward by those people who were lower down in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, such as the parish priests and popular preachers, was identical to the concept which the upper echelons of the Church hierarchy displayed - one only has to think, for example, of the divergence between the views of Innocent III and his episcopate over the treatment of religious enthusiasts such as the Franciscans, Waldensians and Humiliati. It is Wakefield's and Evans' judgement that:

Men could speak of 'heresy' when they meant schism, resistance within the Church to papal administration, political opposition to the hierarchy from secular powers, advocacy of religious toleration, sorcery, or intellectual arrogance; in most cases they could make a show of theological justification for using the term, even if the Church did not always officially accept these enlargements of meaning.³⁰

Whilst it is certainly true that the word 'heresy' could and did have many and varied applications, the assertion that the Church did not always accept the increasing expansion of the concept of heresy is more problematic. In fact, the variety of positions occupied by the authors of the polemical literature is

³⁰Wakefield & Evans, p. 3.

such that it represents a fairly wide range of ecclesiastical opinions. Within this corpus are contained the views of parish priests, abbots, popular preachers, monks, scholastics and inquisitors (not forgetting that the educated laity is also represented in the polemical literature). The vast majority of the people who were applying the notion of 'heresy' across this wide spectrum of dissent, therefore, were themselves churchmen; thus their 'enlargements of meaning' entered into not only orthodox thought but also into official policy. From the definitions of heresy discussed in Ch. 1 it became clear that the changes in the polemical concept of heresy corresponded to the changes which were taking place in the minds of those further up in the Church hierarchy.

It is the expanding notion of heresy and its acceptance into mainstream ecclesiastical thinking which makes the concept of heresy so significant during this this period; not just for the history of heresy, but for the history of the Church itself. The Middle Ages afford a particularly rich example of the way in which theological speculation and spiritual introspection could confront a church's own perceptions of its religious and institutional structures to produce a power-struggle in which survival depended on an assertion of its absolute authority. This was for the simple reason that it was the period in which churchmen were faced with an explosion of religious enthusiasm which forced them to examine most closely their own notions of orthodoxy, and when the medieval Church itself entered into a stage of momentous ecclesiological consolidation and increasingly precise self-definition. The emergence of the twelfth- and thirteenth-century heresies stimulated this process; why else should Hugh of Amiens write an anti-heretical treatise which dealt entirely with the concept of the Church and did not even mention a single heretical doctrine? The fullest treatments of

heresy in the polemical literature - Moneta of Cremona, Benedict of Alignan, for instance - devote a considerable proportion of their works to the discussion of this subject, as a necessary prerequisite to proving that the heretics are not the true Church.

The key issue for the medieval Church during these centuries was control. The question of control over its clergy had come to a head during the Gregorian Reform Programme; in the following centuries it was the control of the religious practices and beliefs of the laity which was to cause the greatest problems. The widening concept of heresy was an integral part of this drive for control, affecting as it did the status of the Church hierarchy in general and the Papacy in particular. As well as itself arising from the increasing emphasis on the primacy of papal jurisdiction, the wider concept of heresy in turn supported the *plenitudo potestatis* of the Papacy.³¹ The various characteristics which polemicists attributed to the 'heretic' also ensured that the skill of defining and recognising heresy was a function only able to be fulfilled by the clergy. The nature of lay piety during this period, which polemicists saw in terms of the problem of the *species pietatis*, meant that those who wished to seek out heresy found it difficult in practice to distinguish heretical from orthodox. Thus polemicists' treatment of what was or was not heretical increasingly sidestepped this problem by focusing on the question of competency. The *species pietatis* meant that only the clergy were skilled enough to detect heretics under their guise of true Christians. The idea of spiritual illiteracy and the dangers inherent in the personal study of

³¹This throws an interesting light upon the vexed question, which surfaced intermittently during the medieval period and especially during the conciliar debates, whether the Pope himself could commit the sin of heresy. Under the earlier theological definitions the Pope could be guilty of heresy, theoretically at least. As the scope of the concept widened, however, and became essentially based on the individual's attitude towards the Church, the grounds for regarding the Pope as a heretic were increasingly diminished.

the Scriptures meant that only the clergy were competent to interpret Scripture or to preach. Even if lay-people were apparently interpreting Scripture correctly or preaching to the edification of others they were not competent to do so and were always liable to fall into error. The safest course was to leave such tasks to the experts.

The juridical changes which the concept of heresy underwent had significant implications for the medieval Church's own understanding and definition of heresy, in that they affected the question of which of the many groups occupying the borders between orthodoxy and heterodoxy were thought to be heretical. The growing tendency, apparent throughout this period, to 'create' heresies was partly the result of the wider concept of heresy. Take for example the persistent belief in the existence of the Adamite and Luciferian sects, both of which had a dubious pedigree and almost certainly never existed in the medieval period, or the more obvious case of the Beghards and Beguines. Lerner's conclusion is that the vast majority of the Beghards and Beguines were not Free Spirits, but credally orthodox followers of the *vita apostolica*. This being the case, how did such people come to be labelled not only as heretical in the theological sense, but also as fornicators, devil-worshippers and sexual deviants of the worst kind? The sense of the homogeneity of heresy which the medieval mind possessed supplies part of the answer; once one group had been so described, even if that description had been made centuries before, all other heretics were tarred with the same brush. At the same time it does point to some contribution on the part of the institutional Church to the 'creation' of this heresy. It would clearly be facile to argue that there was no such thing as heresy and that it was only the theorising activities of the Church which gave endemic religious dissent the appearance of heresy. The doctrinally-based definitions of heresy did after

all still hold good. Yet there is a sense in which the Church can be seen to be shifting the goal-posts; and this is the force of Lerner's talk of a 'heresy of lay-piety'.³² What was in one time and situation the acceptable practice of orthodox religious enthusiasm could so easily be transformed by a shift in ecclesiological perspective into an unacceptably heterodox position. The task of defining heresy, therefore, was, as we saw above, directed to a considerable extent by the clergy, and often had very little to do with doctrinal error as had been the case with the older concept of heresy. Where specific doctrines were at issue, this usually involved not erroneous beliefs, but a corrupt interpretation of what was in itself an orthodox teaching. A 'corrupt' interpretation almost always meant an interpretation which had the potential to evade the institutional Church's control, such as the belief in a life of apostolic poverty, the individual interpretation of Scripture and the practice of unauthorised preaching. Add to this the sense of the 'otherness' and diabolical nature of the heretic which was widespread amongst both clergy and laity, and it is not difficult to see how heretics came to be regarded as more numerous, more widespread and more powerful than they really were.

The focus on the person of 'the heretic' and the diabolical nature which was attributed to all heretics had a significant effect on the medieval Church's own response to those movements which it did judge to be heretical. The concept of the *ecclesia malignantium* and the diabolical succession of heretics ensured that polemicists looked to factors outside the institutional Church in order to understand and explain the nature of the new heresies. Moreover they transmitted this view to other people engaged in the fight against

³²*The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, pp. 44-54.

heresy. The yawning gulf which polemicists placed between orthodox and heretical - a gulf which was created not by doctrinal beliefs, but by the intrinsic nature of the people involved - meant that the policy of diverting religious enthusiasm into orthodox channels which Innocent III, for instance, had pursued was no longer possible. The wider concept therefore put added weight behind the forces emerging in the medieval Church which were in favour of tighter control of the laity; forces which were eventually to push that Church into the use of violent repression as a means of attaining that control.

The interplay between the expanding concept of heresy and the desire for control can most clearly be seen at work during the pontificate of Innocent III. Innocent's careful examination of the beliefs of those groups which sought his approval indicates that he was prepared to make a distinction between orthodox followers of the *vita apostolica* and those people who had slipped into heresy. That the rest of the Church hierarchy were less willing to make such distinctions is obvious; after Innocent had approved the lifestyle of the *Humiliati* and given them permission to preach (although not on doctrinal issues) under episcopal license, he had explicitly to order his bishops not to refuse such licences.³³ His treatment of other groups such as the Waldensians was equally discriminating. Such discernment stands in stark contrast to other aspects of his policy, the prime example being his launching of the Albigensian Crusade against the Cathars in southern France. The Fourth Lateran Council's proscription of new orders in 1215 - a proscription by which the medieval Church finally signalled its official desire to bring to a halt the uncontrollable surge in religious enthusiasm - was the

³³Bolton, 'Innocent III's Treatment of the Humiliati', p. 77.

reverse of Innocent's previous policy. From where did the support for such a ban arise? Clearly it did not come from Innocent himself, but rather from those churchmen lower down in the hierarchy who lacked Innocent's discernment and were faced with the problem of explaining to their parishes that the Humiliati were not heretics but that some of the Waldensians were. The pressure for the ban arose from precisely those people for whom the polemicists had been writing their anti-heretical treatises. Thus the polemical concept of heresy contributed in large measure to the pressures in favour of greater control which were building up inside the medieval Church and before which Innocent was finally forced to bow.

Ullmann finds the answer to the question of why the medieval Church increasingly resorted to violent repression in its reaction to two factors. First, heresy was an attack on the magisterial function of the Pope; any aberration from the faith being an attack on the lawfully constituted authority of the Church.³⁴ Second, any assertion that the Pope was not entitled to issue a particular law was an attack on his juristic function.³⁵ There is, however, a third factor at work here. The close link between the developing concept of heresy during this period, and the increasing tendency towards the use of violent force as a means of control, contributed to the eventual emergence of the inquisitorial process. It would, perhaps, be going too far to say that it was the widening scope of the concept of heresy which provided the essential basis for the justification of ecclesiastical repression of dissent and that without this widening concept the inquisitorial process might never have come into existence. However, the juridical expansion of the concept, combined with the emphasis on the diabolical nature of the heretic, made a

³⁴*Historical Introduction*, p. 39.

³⁵*Historical Introduction*, p. 40-41.

substantial contribution to the theory which underpinned the development of the inquisitorial process. The juridical expansion of the notion meant that heresy became the crime of treason against the God, the Pope and the Church - a crime which was even more serious than that of civil treason. The emphasis on the diabolical nature of the heretic coupled with the use of the disease metaphor underlined the fact that people's souls were at stake - although this last had always been the case to a certain extent, since to persist stubbornly in a theological error was a mortal sin which would ultimately end in damnation. The crucial new element in the concept of heresy was the diabolical nature of the heretic. This meant that that heretics - even suspected heretics - did not have to be treated like ordinary people, and so the safeguards and procedures which were accorded to people accused of civil crimes were entirely absent from the inquisitorial process.³⁶ Whilst a theological error could be recanted and hell thus avoided, membership of the *ecclesia malignantium*, once acquired, was irrevocable.

Two specific areas for further study have arisen from this thesis. One is the concept of heresy put forward in Cardinal Humbert's treatise *Adversus simoniacos* (c. 1054-58). This treatise fell outside the limits which were set for this study, but it is highly unusual in several respects: its absolute identification of simony as a heresy (a minority position in the debates about the validity of simoniacal orders) and its theoretical consideration of the nature of heresy, which includes such motifs as Israel and Judah as the types of the heretic and the Catholic, the signs and portents of Catholics and heretics, and the 'profane trinity' of heretics, Jews and the Antichrist. The second is the figure of Simon Magus. The scope of this subject could be

³⁶Ullmann, *Historical Introduction*, p. 31-33.

broadened to include eleventh-century anti-simony treatises and popular legends such as those contained in the *Legenda aurea* and Dante's *Inferno*. Overall, there are many other aspects of the medieval concept of heresy which deserve further study: the concept of heresy in papal and conciliar legislation, its role in the development of the inquisitorial process, the canonical treatment of heresy and the problem of simony and heresy and the polemic against so-called 'intellectual' heresies are but a few aspects of this vast and as yet largely uncharted territory.

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